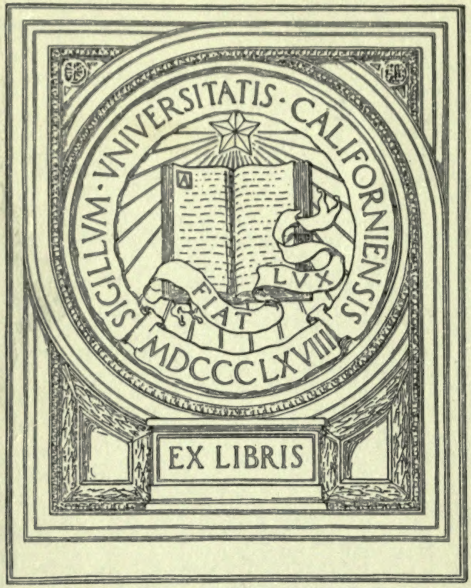

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CHRIST BLESSING THE BREAD.

THE HISTORY OF RELIGION:

A RATIONAL ACCOUNT OF THE TRUE RELIGION.

BY

JOHN EVELYN,

AUTHOR OF "SYLVA," ETC.

NOW FIRST PUBLISHED,

BY PERMISSION OF W. J. EVELYN, ESQ., M.P.,

FROM THE ORIGINAL MS. IN THE LIBRARY AT WOTTON.

"Be ready always to give an answer to every man, that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear."—I. PET., iii., 15.

"I am verily persuaded that errors shall not be imputed to them as sin, who use such measures of industry in finding Truth, as human prudence and ordinary discretion (their abilities and opportunities, their distractions and hindrances, and all other things considered) shall advise them to."—CHILLINGWORTH.

EDITED, WITH NOTES,

BY THE REVEREND R. M. EVANSON, B.A.,

RECTOR OF LANSOY, MONMOUTHSHIRE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

HENRY COLBURN, PUBLISHER,

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1850.

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TO

HIS GRACE

THE DUKE OF BEAUFORT,

THESE VOLUMES,

FROM THE PEN OF AN ILLUSTRIOUS WRITER,

IN TOKEN OF ESTEEM,

ARE, WITH HIS GRACE'S PERMISSION,

RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

BY HIS OBLIGED AND FAITHFUL SERVANT,

THE EDITOR.

EDITOR'S PREFACE.

"He, being dead, yet speaketh."

After a peaceful slumber of nearly two centuries in the Wotton Library, the original manuscript from which this work is printed was last year brought into light and notice by the publication of the "Life of Mrs. Godolphin," from the pen of the same Author. This circumstance directed fresh attention to the collection of manuscripts still in the possession of his representative, W. J. Evelyn, Esq., M.P., at the family-seat in Surrey, by whose permission the fruit of his literary labours, in a new and most important department, is now, for the first time, given to the world. It is but due to the Publisher to relate, that it was mainly owing to his suggestions that the manuscript was carefully examined; and though, perhaps from its bulk, the grave theological character of

its contents, and the exceeding minuteness of the writing, it seems to have possessed few charms for the eyes of those who hitherto have been permitted to inspect the Wotton manuscripts, yet, upon patient investigation, it proved to be a work of considerable learning and research; and, being partly devoted to the examination of doctrines then current or opposed, was thought not ill adapted to a controversial age—nay, in some measure, calculated to soften the peculiar prejudices of our times; to lead men to allow that all catholicity of mind is not Romanism; nor attachment to the pure teaching of the English Church incompatible with unqualified rejection of Romish error; nor Christian charity of necessity violated by a calm and fearless exhibition and condemnation of the fallacies of dissent.

To this end, the well-known piety of the Author, coupled with the trying times in which he lived, must greatly contribute. Himself a layman, he is free from suspicion of priestcraft. His religious attachment to the Church of his Baptism is no fair-weather conformity in her

sunny hours, but is manifested by firm allegiance in her days of darkness and distress, when he who owned his Spiritual Mother was not exempt from danger of proscription, imprisonment, or even exile. At such a period of her history, John Evelyn, a gentleman of fortune, with many dear ties to warp his judgment astray, showed rare strength and rectitude of principle, in choosing rather, at all hazard, through faith in her Divine mission, to heed the pure light of an obscured and persecuted Church, (unlike some who would desert her in the hour of peril) than to bask with the many in the wild red glare of fanaticism wherewith the land was overspread.

Nor was his fidelity without its reward, so to speak; for he lived to see her restored, if not to the fulness of her rays, at least to her former elevated position, whence she might engage once more, under accumulated difficulties, it is true, in dispelling either the mists of infidelity that followed by re-action the gross hypocrisy of the Interregnum, or the chilling indifference to "things unseen" so largely caught up from the pernicious example of a dissolute Court.

In confirmation of these remarks, we have only to extract a few passages from his Diary of the time. In a foot-note to the title-page of the manuscript, we are informed that this work was "begun in the year 1657, when the Church of England was in persecution;" and about that date are the following entries:—

"3rd August (1656). I went to London to receive the Blessed Sacrament, the first time the Church of England was reduced to a Chamber and Conventicle, so sharp was the persecution. The Parish Churches were filled with sectaries of all sorts, blasphemous and ignorant mechanics usurping the pulpits every where."[1]

In the following year he writes under date December 25th,

"Christmas-day. I went to London with my wife, to celebrate Christmas-day, Mr. Gunning preaching in Exeter Chapel, on Micah, vii., 3. Sermon ended, as he was giving us the Holy Sacrament, the chapel was surrounded with soldiers, and all the communicants and assembly surprised and kept prisoners by them, some in the house, others carried away. It fell to my share to be confined to a room in the house, where yet I was permitted to dine with the master of it, the Countess of Dorset, Lady Hatton, and some others of quality who invited me. In the afternoon came Colonel Whalley, Goffe, and others, from Whitehall, to examine us one by one; some they

[1] Evelyn's Diary, new edition, vol. i., p. 316.

committed to the Marshal, some to prison. When I came before them, they took my name and abode; examined me why, contrary to the ordinance made that none should any longer observe the superstitious time of the Nativity, (so esteemed by them) I durst offend, and particularly be at Common Prayers, which they told me was but the Mass in English, and particularly pray for Charles Stuart, for which we had no Scripture. I told them we did not pray for Charles Stuart, but for all Christian Kings, Princes, and Governors. They replied, In so doing we prayed for the King of Spain too, who was their enemy and a Papist; with other frivolous and ensnaring questions and much threatening; and, finding no colour to detain me, they dismissed me with much pity of my ignorance. These were men of high flight, and above ordinances, and spake spiteful things of our Lord's Nativity. As we went up to receive the Sacrament, the miscreants held their muskets against us, as if they would have shot us at the Altar, but yet suffering us to finish the office of Communion, as perhaps not having instructions what to do in case they found us in that action."[1]

Again, after the Restoration and the return of the Church of England from her captivity, his mind is so impressed with the overpowering bad example of the Court, and the general corruption that followed thereupon, that he does not hesitate to assign it as the chief cause of those signal

[1] Evelyn's Diary, new edition, vol. i., p. 323.

visitations, the Great Plague and Fire of London, thus recorded in the Diary:—[1]

"October 10 (1666). This day was ordered a general fast through the nation, to humble us on the late dreadful conflagration, added to the plague and war, the most dismal judgments that could be inflicted; but which indeed we highly deserved, for our prodigious ingratitude, burning lusts, dissolute Court, profane and abominable lives; under such dispensations of God's continued favour in restoring Church, Prince, and People, from our late intestine calamities, of which we were altogether unmindful, even to astonishment."

The result of such, or rather similar feelings, was, in 1657, the commencement of the present work, the scope and design whereof, as well as the motives that led to the undertaking, are told most strikingly in the Author's Preface, to which the Reader is especially referred. In the earlier chapter of the First Volume there will be found coincidences of thought, and even expression, with writers who have subsequently handled the same topics; as, for instance, when treating of the moral government of the world, passages occur closely resembling the arguments of Bishop Butler, in his Analogy of Religion, who wrote,

[1] Evelyn's Diary, new edition, vol. ii., p. 17.

it need hardly be said, in the following century. In arguing, also, from Natural to Revealed Religion, Mr. Evelyn's illustrations are frequently identical with those of the modern Paley. It is not, of course, pretended that such subjects are handled in the same masterly way as by those eminent writers, who concentrated their mental forces upon, perhaps, a single branch of the many topics of this comprehensive Treatise; they are merely alluded to as further evidence, if any were wanted, of the versatility and originality of the Author's intellectual powers. In the Second Volume, wherein he professes to explain the true doctrines of Holy Scripture, and of the Church of England, the chief interest attaching to it will be found to consist in its value as an impartial interpretation of her Articles and Liturgy; conveyed, too, in a manner which shows he was not propounding new views, but merely stating them as understood by her members in his time. The inferences that may be drawn from the perusal of this portion of the work are too palpable to need comment here.

It remains only to give a brief description of

the manuscript itself, in order to explain how far its integrity has been preserved, in preparing it for the press. From the remarkable accuracy of the writing, as well as from portions of the rough draft being found with it, it appears to be a second copy, and by the Author himself, with a view to publication ultimately. This is partly corroborated by the close of his Preface, where, alluding to his "Adversaria," or collection of extracts from different authors (in the previous page termed his "Controversial Chapter), he says that "they [*i.e.*, the Extracts] were entered promiscuously, and without that care I should have used, had I then designed them for this Treatise, or ever to appear in public."

This "Adversaria," stitched up with the MS., and sufficient to fill a volume in itself, it was not deemed advisable to publish, as forming no integral part of the work, and consisting, with few exceptions, of quotations from authors now in the hands of all. Two extracts, however, have been given in the form of an Appendix, being to all appearance in his own language, and on important topics. After this second copy

was completed, the margin furnishes proof of its revision by the Author himself, correcting even trifling orthographical errors, and, to judge from the different colour of the ink, at different periods of his life. On a separate paper among the Wotton manuscripts the following memorandum certainly occurs — "Things I would write out fair, and reform;" and "A Rational Account of the True Religion, or a History of it, with a packet of Notes belonging to it," forms one of the list.[1] But this probably refers to the fresh ideas, inserted during revision, in the margin, which, doubtless, had it been published in his lifetime, he would have embodied in the work, but, in the hands of another unwilling to do violence to the text, must be suffered to descend into the notes. It appears, also, from the original title-page of the manuscript, that the Author was in doubt about what name he should give it. *Εὐσεβεία* first, and this is scratched out; next *Θρησκεία* occurs, after the words "History of Religion." It should be mentioned, also, that lower down on the page he inserts, after the

[1] This "packet of notes" cannot be found.

last title, "A Rational Account of the True Religion," the following summary of its contents:—

Asserting
The most ancient to be the only True and Best: The Jewish, why, and how changed? Why not that of the Gentile? or Mahometan, but the *Christian?* Why not any of the
Christian Sects, but the CATHOLIC Reformed?
Collected for the
Settling and *Establishment* of my own *Choice.*

The remainder is as given in the title-page of these volumes. Thus it will be seen that the integrity of the work has been preserved in all material points, the "Adversaria" alone being omitted, and of course palpable repetitions, not unfrequent, as might be supposed, in a manuscript which seems to have occupied the last thirty years of an active and well-employed life.[1] Occasionally, too, some trifling orthographical errors have been corrected, the very long paragraphs subdivided, and the titles of the sections, where omitted, gathered from the subject and prefixed. At the request of the Publisher, the

[1] 1657 is the date of its commencement, and 1683 is written on the manuscript as the current year, in order to verify one of the Author's dates, during the progress of the work.

spelling has been changed (it being uncertain, and the work sufficiently abstruse), and a few notes added for the convenience of the general reader, with translations, when not given in substance in the text, for the benefit of those unacquainted with the languages in which the quotations occur; such foreign matter being invariably distinguished from what belongs to the Author by inverted commas and brackets: whence it appears that little has been demanded of the Editor beyond patient transcription of the MS.; while, in order to ensure its integrity, even this labour has been shared by an able amanuensis, Mr. Hook, whose co-operation proved most serviceable, especially in collation, and deciphering passages that would have puzzled any eyes but those well versed in such work.[1]

In conclusion, it is earnestly hoped that good may result from presenting these volumes to the world; that His Name may be hallowed whose truth they uphold; and that they may find their way to the hearts of all who give them

[1] A strong magnifying-glass was in constant requisition for the marginal notes.

perusal. And if the spirits of the departed (to speak with all reverence) are at all cognizant of human affairs, we may conceive it not unpleasing to their Author, after a lapse of two centuries, to return, as it were, for a season, unfettered by "the body of this death," to instruct and admonish "them that are alive;" to be instrumental, it may be, with the Divine blessing, in adding fresh numbers to the "great cloud of witnesses, the spirits of just men made perfect" above.

THE EDITOR.

June, 1850.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

Living in an age wherein religion, piety, and even common honesty were made to subserve the ends and interests of dominion and ambition, or the advantages of some private party, and by men of all persuasions affecting empire, there was nothing left unattempted to support their avarice and pride. Fundamental laws and establishments being subverted; princes (who should protect them) murdered; the most solemn oaths violated; churches robbed; and the afflictions which the most innocent suffered of spoil, evil, imprisonment, and death itself, cried up as the effects of the zeal of a godly party. Ignorance and enthusiasm, hypocrisy and treason, universally reigning, and that whosoever did not receive this mark in his forehead, and not prostitute himself, soul and body, to propagate the interests of the most sacrilegious and unrighteous acquisitions, (that ever a rebellious and disobedient people maliciously and wantonly un-

dertook) were looked upon as traitors, declared or clandestine enemies to the public weal. That men of all religions (or fancies, rather), Jews, Socinians, Anabaptists, Antinomians, Independents, Quakers, Pagans, and (what is worse) Atheists, and a thousand new sects and denominations, were protected and encouraged under notion of New Lights, Perfectionists, a Godly Party, and persons above ordinances, freely preaching, printing, and promoting their extravagant doctrines, and had advocates to plead for them; that, whilst the waters were troubled, the crafty fishers might cast in their hooks, and satiate themselves with spoil and booty: when I perceived the soberest pretenders countermined one the other for the Supreme Power; that even the very *sanctions* and laws of Nature as well as of nations were violated; perjury justified and rewarded; Christian churches, and the folds of the true flock, made draught houses, and stables of horses and dens of wild beasts; the "calves" set up, and the hierarchy usurped by every blind leader; Scripture profaned and perverted; the tribunals and seats of justice corrupted; the aged dishonoured; that there were no commandments, no creed, no liturgy, no

baptism, no catechism, no sacraments, no legal marriages, no discipline in the Church; that the schools were interdicted, the universities clouded and threatened; Christian feasts abolished; bishops and priest pronounced Antichristian; in sum, "when there was no king in Israel, but every one did what was right in his own eyes."

And when I saw that for all this everything prospered which these men did, and that any religion was good but the old Christian, which taught men obedience to princes, reverence to antiquity, order and discipline in the Church, frequent communion, orthodox doctrine, according to the undoubted tenor of Sacred Scripture and universal consent of the purest ages; and that all reason and learning was not carnal; nor all decency, superstition; nor all candour, and fidelity, and innocency of life, the effect of moral conscience only, but the power of God, and the result of a gracious education.

When, on the other side, again, I considered that, after God had restored the laws, and brought back the captivity in so stupendous a manner, as next to that of the Jews from Babylon, there is not to be found in history, sacred or profane, a more wonderful deliverance of a

nation in any age; and that, after all these mercies (yea, even miracles) and signal revolutions, people (though with less hypocrisy) grew more ungrateful and impiously atheistical, sensual, revengeful, and not so much as regarding a form of religion; that the princes and great men, who ought to have been examples of virtue to others, were abandoned to all manner of luxury, open and avowed adulteries; the clergy despised, the prelates under, afraid of denouncing against these enormities; the gentry dissolute, theatres profane, the people libertine, and that, indeed, there was no face of sincere religion amongst us: when, I say, I beheld all this, and that in other matters men ascribed so much to nature, senseless matter, craft and force; that, in a word (as the great Apostle expresses it of the heathen),[1] "as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient, being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication," &c. For all this, to my great sorrow, I was witness of: when, I say, I beheld all this, "my feet were almost gone, my treadings had well nigh slipped,[2] and I began seriously

[1] Rom., i., 28-32. [2] Psalm, lxxiii., 2.

to consider some time with myself, whether, in truth, all that which had been taught us concerning God, and religion, and honour, and conscience, were not mere chimeras and impostures contrived by our forefathers, crafty men in their generation, and but now again resumed by as subtle a race as they, to amuse the credulous, superstitious, or less discerning people; whilst the great and polite ones of the world believed nothing at all of it, whose actions had so little affinity with their pretensions, and all that they yet held forth of the greatest and most refined sanctity.

These thoughts put me at last upon a serious resolution of a more accurate and sedulous inquiry, and now no longer to acquiesce in what I had taken in by education, and other general notions concerning religion, which, by many and dangerous errors, I suspected, might be propagated to posterity, and which (the more I sought) I found had not only prevailed with, and perverted wise and learned men, persons of all ages, sexes, and professions, but even whole nations and countries, of which some were wicked and barbarous, as not only do their own histories make out, but the present idolatry, superstition,

fanaticism, and brutishness, which do still obtain in divers parts of the world to this period.

The thing, therefore, which in order hereto I thought myself first concerned to examine, was not with so much expectation of investigating many new arguments of what I was in search, or to divert others with fine disputes and speculations; but so to discipline and reduce the scattered notions and materials which books and discourses, and the reason and moment of the thing, had from time to time furnished me withal (but which had till now lain confusedly about me), into some kind of method; that, upon impartial view of their strength, and summing up their force and evidence, I might judge and determine of the issue, and accordingly consult what party to take, and resolve once for all what course to pursue for the future, and so to settle my fluctuating thoughts, the best and most prudently I could, in the generation I was to serve, and, as far as I was able, not be wanting to myself for the obtaining that felicity we all aspire after, if, at least, any such thing there were;[1]

[1] "Si enim post-mortem nihil sumus, profecto stultissimi est hominis non huic vitæ consulere ut sit quam divina et commodis omnibus plena."—*Lactantius.*

and if not, that I might extricate my spirit from those perplexities, and at once emancipate myself from the doubts and emotions which the belief of an eternal being hereafter, designed to infinite happiness, or doomed to endless and intolerable misery, did continually expose us to; either of which, if I were able to accomplish (by laying education, custom, superstition, parties, and prejudices aside, and dealing clearly and ingenuously with myself), I then concluded I might pass my life with less regret and better resolution for the future, as long as nature and my constitution would suffer me, whatever other circumstances happened, which I was to encounter or conciliate with the best prudence I could, and with this satisfaction to sit down and acquiesce.[1]

In pursuance, therefore, of this weighty enterprise, I first set myself to examine what argument seemed with the greatest probability to evince the notion of a Supreme Being: in sum, whether there were indeed any such thing as a God at all! For, when that should be well

[1] Such a design I find mentioned by the learned and eloquent Dr. Sprat, Bishop of Rochester, and to have been reflected on by that incomparable wit, and excellent person, Mr. Cowley (whilst he lived), my most worthy friend.

cleared up in the affirmative, whether he took any further cognizance of us, or not, I began soon to be convinced that He was to be adored of His creatures, and served after His own appointment. And, supposing this should yet be uncertain, that nevertheless it was not only reasonable, but the highest prudence to do it; since, if a God, He must needs be just, and do righteously; which, consisting in rewards and punishments to those who deserve them, the living a virtuous and pious life must needs be transcendently preferable to a vicious and disorderly; since, whether there were a Deity or no, it were but what a wise man would choose for the ease and felicity of it: religion being so grave, serious, and so useful a thing, and of so vast importance, that, if it be not true, all mankind have reason to wish it were; and in case there be such a God (besides the baseness and inconvenience of vicious habits here), to hazard His displeasure and appendant deserved misery, and put it to adventure, were madness, and altogether intolerable.

A God, therefore, being found out, His attributes would of necessity follow; and I was next to inquire after what manner He would be

served, what worship and rites He expected; which being once so happy as to attain, my search (I concluded) was at an end, and all that depended upon it; matters of necessary belief being, I supposed, much easier than practice: for it is not the being christened, reckoned a Protestant, or denominated of a party, that will save one, as if it worked as a charm or spell, we know not how, or why, whether minding it or no, but by our improvement and exercise of what we possess; there being no word in the whole Scriptures more certain than that *without holiness no one shall see God.*

Most will tell us they believe the gospel for a most certain truth, nay, profess they would even die for it, till they meet with something that crosses them, or goes against their interest, and then they secretly hope it is not so. Christ's death (as one says) seems to serve, not to destroy sin out of the world, but *Christianity* itself; when the Scripture tells us plainly, that *He is become the author of salvation to them only who obey Him*, and *that He will come in flaming fire to render vengeance on them who obey Him not.* What should then induce any one to believe that he shall be saved, whether he believes or serves

Him not? So that a necessity of living well, I saw, was consequent to truth; and this established, what was to be superstructed, I saw, would not be difficult; there being in the world, and especially the Scriptures, and other authentics (the veracity whereof would fall in with my former disquisitions), such plentiful materials, so much light, so clear decisions, so many and pregnant instances, as were sufficient to guide any humble, sober, and rational person, who was not blinded with avarice or ambition, perverted with pleasure and sensuality, impatience, sloth, superstition, or the like prejudices and prepossessions, from which I so earnestly laboured to vindicate and redeem myself; or, if possibly I should not always hit upon the right (holding the foundation), I could not but think, and indeed conclude, that, if there were a God, He must be full of goodness and pity, and therefore pardon all invincible mistakes in searching after truth, when they were not made invincible by our own negligence.

Now, that this might not be my fault, I drew the plan of my designed inquiry as ample and comprehensive as I was able (as will be seen by the many topics I have handled and traced from

divines, philosophers, philologers, historians, and others), to evince the truth of what I was in quest of; and therefore could not avoid repeating what others have done before me on this subject, though not after the same method: and if I have appeared somewhat prolix in asserting the immortality of the soul, it was what I deemed of greatest consequence, and my drift all along, to discuss the nature of that principle, how in man it differs from the animal and sensual, and to give myself a fuller survey of men's opinions concerning that so momentous and abstruse a point; since upon that alone depended the whole stress of this inquiry, and in truth of all we have of precious and worthy our solicitude in this umbratile and transitory passage.

In the mean time, I was glad to find that infamous book, *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*, so handsomely perstringed; it being certainly the product of an author very far from any sense of religion, and a wretched obstacle to the searchers of holy truth. But he is not alone; we have others nearer home (besides Spinosa, Bruno, Cardan, &c.), deifying the power of matter and the laws of Nature as divine decrees, to invalidate (as much as in them lies) the veneration

of Scripture, upon the pretence of the uncertainty of those oracles, the supernatural inspirations, visions, and favours; and that the prophets and great men of those times might possibly be enthusiasts, or delirious and mistaken, and so what they deliver down to us doubtful or precarious: in sum, making religion a mere figment, and *that* (as well as man himself) but an engine, and by discarding all natural justice, goodness, and charity, and resolve it into brutish force.

This, as to the laws of empire, is the language which a man of great name,[1] lately come amongst us, teaches his disciples, and perhaps what these bold heroes would have published, yet in plainer terms, if they durst speak out, who have already debauched and ruined a great many of the volatile and less wary sort. But they are all so abundantly baffled, that none, save the raw and fantastical wits, and those who have read little and thought less of ancient and solid learning, and are disposed to embrace the pleasures of sense and affect singularity, can possibly suffer themselves to be perverted, without being miserably depraved and shattered in their understanding. For the Christian religion, and the base it

[1] Hobbs.

stands upon, seems to me so perspicuous, and their reasonings so false, that there is no merit in believing it. So as none, save those determined Atheists who maliciously shut their eyes to the light, can avoid it.

But the world is now come to that pass, or rather to that profaneness, as to religion, that as it is a reproach not to be *called* a Christian, so it is a greater to *be* one. Our *beaux* and *esprits forts* make a mockery of the most venerable truths, and deride all piety, to save their reputation. It is enough to have religion in our creed, not in our hearts. In the mean time, there is nothing which these triflers have offered, or the impostors whom they follow, but what the old Heresiarchs and most pestilent of the Atheists have long since broached; as is abundantly seen in Irenæus, Arnobius, St. Augustine (a wit infinitely superior to the most pretending of these), Justin Martyr, Tertullian, &c., and of later times; and since the same poison has diffused itself in this age (as forerunners of great confusion), by the incomparable Grotius, Bishop Andrews, Drs. Hammond, Jackson, Stillingfleet, Barrow, &c., in express treatises and other works of inestimable value, not omitting

those elaborate pieces (printing since the writing hereof) of Drs. Cudworth, Cumberland, Patrick, Parker, &c., and of those abroad, the learned Huetius, Johannes Batalerius, and innumerable others.

It is when one has thoroughly read and well digested the ancient and later writers whom I have named, and who have obtained the suffrages of sixteen hundred years, that one shall be fit to encounter and pronounce concerning these impudent sophisters, who deny matter or fact with so steeled a front: men they are, who upon pride of their wit, and boldness of speaking things profanely, (in a most abandoned age) are held in estimation amongst those *drolls*, ignorant and slavish sycophants, who catch at everything that may serve to charm the serpent of natural conscience that is perpetually stinging and lashing their profligate lives and ugly crimes with something which makes vice and sensuality uneasy to them, when they chance to give themselves the seldom leisure of thinking seriously and as they would wish they had, when they come to die.

But put the case that there were no such thing, at last, as reward for virtue, or punish

ment for vice, a man shall lose nothing for believing there is; and if there be, the infidel is lost. They do not consider that we are sent into these bodies of ours, and dignified with the intellectual faculty of reason, for trial and probation; that, after all God has done for us, mysteriously, Himself in person, and by his prophets, apostles, and other extraordinary dispensations in all ages, He expects that we should conform to the rules and precepts He has dictated by them, to the end that we may be worthy the life of God, and that immense reward which He has reserved for those obsequious servants of His, reverers of His law and divine economy.

If there were no other proofs in the world, the Scriptures themselves, describing the persons, the non-secular interests of the authors, with the circumstances of their lives, preaching, doctrines, sufferings, and successes, among those learned nations that were in full possession of all other temporal advantages, it were sufficient to vanquish all contradiction. But if for all this they do not think it worth the while — will be wiser than God, and adventure the hazard of a being so perfect, and consummately happy, above all we can imagine desirable to an intellectual creature

—and will put that upon chance for the gratifying of their sense so short a time, especially when all that is required of us is but what a moral wise man would choose, and many Pagans did so, without any such certainty, or prospect of reward and bliss to come: if, I say, men will hazard a possible eternal and happy being for a possible intolerable misery—the satisfactory and inward pleasure of virtue, innocence, purity, beneficence, and dominion over the passions—that sweet serenity and tranquillity of mind, which alone are (even in this life) antepasts of the Heavenly, upon so transitory and uncertain fruition here, pleasures that perish in the using, dying in their hands—I cannot help it.

But, as for my own particular, I will always pray *that my soul may not enter into their secret*, be they reputed never so great, subtle, learned, and extraordinary in their generation. Nor does this proceed from the prejudices of education: I have been exceedingly diligent (according to my poor talent) to inform myself, and to examine the foundation whereon those have superstructed, who have now stood unshaken as a rock these five thousand years, *malgré* all the force of men and devils, and will so continue

to the world's end. And had I any thing to bless Heaven for above the rest, (as I have many) it would be verily for this—that I am not in the least temptation to doubt, much less disbelieve, any one article of our most holy truth, for any thing that I have heard or read from any of these magnificent and daring wits, (real fops and confident triflers) and whom I look upon with pity, and as set up by that haughty and imposturous Spirit whom God permits to exercise the sons of men, that those who escape and are approved may be made manifest, and receive an immortal reward.

POSTSCRIPT.

I do here likewise declare freely that I was not able nor solicitous to put this discourse into so new a dress, as that it should not appear how confident I have been to make use of whatever I found to my purpose. On the contrary, I have, without any apology, transcribed whole periods out of several authors, and challenge little to myself but the adjusting and putting my materials into a fresh method and connexion, as might best suit and comply with the design, which was, *to settle and satisfy myself;* never pretend-

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ERRATA.

VOL. I.

Page 73, note; for "eximæ" read eximiæ.
Page 127, note; for "præstantissimus," read præstantissimis.



THE TRUE RELIGION.

CHAPTER I.[1]

WHETHER THERE BE A DEITY AND SUPREME BEING?

THAT THERE IS, PROVED

SECTION I. BY UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGES.
SECTION II. BY THE CREATION OF THE WORLD.
SECTION III. { PART I. BY THE SOUL OF MAN. / PART II. BY THE NOVITY OF THE WORLD.
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SECTION I. BY UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGES.

Σὺν θεῷ.

Although, amongst all the disquisitions and controversies about Religion, this most certainly needs least dispute and probation; everything we see, and everything that moves evincing it,[2] so as to deny, or indeed

[1] Consult Dr. Tillotson, two first Sermons in his first part, for this Chapter, and the first concerning Atheists.

[2] See a Discourse of Natural and Revealed Religion in my brother's library at Wotton, sold at the 3 Pigeons, Inner Temple Gate.

so much as to question it, reproaches as well our common sense as our reason; yet, forasmuch as some such monsters there have been and yet are (at least, if one may estimate by their lives and morals), in these last and dregs of times, I conceive it not amiss for me to remove that rubbish, and at once to clear my way, by calling to mind, and putting into method, some of those irrefragable, though common arguments, produced for proof.

Of the contents of this chapter, upon which the subsequent Discourse is to be established—

The existence of a Deity is so much an innate and fundamental principle, that not only Holy Scripture makes it out, but all the wise and sober men in the world, Heathens and others, at all times and in all places, have taken it for granted. And therefore Moses, without any further preamble, commences the sacred story of the Creation, peremptorily and positively, as an undeniable effect of the Prime Cause, making not the least doubt of the Author. And so we rightly begin our Christian Symbol, "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth," &c., as an indisputable notion, woven into the very contexture and constitution of our Being, putting all argumentation to silence. For, is it reasonable to imagine, that Nature should put any false impressions into us repugnant to those original principles she has so universally established, namely, an irreluctant and free assent to such truths as are the continual objects of our senses, as that two and two make four, that the whole is greater than

the part, &c.? There are as certain and immutable truths in Morality as in Geometry and quantity, and were so even before there was any creature to consider and examine them. For some conclusions are of themselves so perspicuous and evident as to need no ratiocination to induce our assent, even at first sight and hearing only—I say, divers moral and intellectual truths, and principles so connatural to us, as admit of no contradiction. Everybody agrees that there is in our very nature sentiments of right and wrong; to do as we would be done by; to revere our parents; to be grateful to our benefactors; to clothe our bodies, and the like. And there are secret and indelible perceptions of Immortality, and of rewards and punishments hereafter, and a conscience of guilt or inward satisfaction waiting on all our actions. And these innate notions are not the effects of education only; but antecedent, and connexed with the very constitution of our souls, and evincing something extraordinary, and are the same among all mankind, whose understandings are entire.

There is that within every one of us which sometimes raises doubts, puts the question, thinks and reasons, and certainly knows she does so (be it Mind, Soul, Reason, or whatever principle), which is irresistibly obliged to assent to those eternal verities as incontestable; and there is a True and a False, a Just and Unjust in all things and to all beings, and (maugre all our Hobbists), that which is true and untrue in respect of Man is so both to angels and to God himself.

And so, in like manner, are the relations of perfec-

tion between ideas, immutable and fixed as the laws of the Medes and Persians. For, granting that Education be of wonderful force to make one man differ from another, and has a real influence upon whole nations as well as upon particular persons, it never yet so far prevailed as to call in question the propositions we have mentioned, and several more of the like kind, among which that of the being of some FIRST, which had nothing previous to it, is undeniable.

Every art and science, language and fashion, suffers alteration in tract of time; but the existence of a Supreme Being has never yet been questioned by men in their senses, or suffered the least revolution. It is still the same in all times, at distances, amongst all nations, civilized or savage; none so brutish and barbarous as to deny the existence of some God.[1] The want and indigence of innumerable other things and conveniences of life many people and nations have sustained; but never do we read of any, who were utterly without something they feared and worshipped, though it were but a red clout, an onion, or head of garlick; which shows the nature of our mind to be of such a frame as, by the ordinary exercise of the faculties, it determines here.

Nor could the great and wise Creator possibly so far abandon the creature (which above all He had enriched with a capacity of knowing and serving Him,) as to

[1] Cic., lib. i., De Leg., et cl. 11. To the same purpose, and almost in the same words, "Nulla gens adeo extra leges moresque projecta, ut non aliquos Deos colat."—*Seneca.*

leave him without any *seminal*[1] *principle* or inclination, that might conduct him to the spring and fountain of his being.

Let any one reason and give himself time to think, and trace emergent consequences, be the rivulet never so small, it will, after all its meanders, bring him to the source from whence it flows; and thus, whether upwards or downwards, beginning at ourselves, we take hold of the chain by either link, we shall at last find one of the extremes fastened to Jupiter's chain.[2]

Let us look into the Gentile world so many ages past, or among the Heathens at this present day—of innumerable instances to produce a few. The most ancient of all philosophers, Hermes, in Egypt, (who doubtless received it from the Hebrews) uses almost the very words of Moses. Plato the Academic,[3] and prince of the Peripatetics, Aristotle,[4] tells us that *God*, or *Mind*, was author of all, even of Nature herself; and particularly in his Treatise *De Mirabilibus*, brings that instance of the Ocean's menacing an universal Deluge,

[1] That is, Reason exerting her faculties in due time, as seed thrown into the ground, though making no appearance at first.

[2] Noverim me, noverim Te (S. Bernard).

"Did I know myself, I should know Thee."

[3] In Timæo.

[4] Metaphys. I know what has been objected to Aristotle; but the imputation is so unjust, whilst he plainly has recourse to the First Mover, and the Τὸ Πᾶν in his Metaphysics, and where in his other Books of Nature he speaks of the Eternal, Immortal Prime Cause, as shows it to be an aspersion; not to add what he has said in his Book *De Mundo;* if that piece be his.

by reason of its height above the Earth, were it not restrained by some superior power. *Zeno* and the stoics, nay, the most sensual and supine of all, Epicurus, unites in this central truth. To this agree Theophrastus, Stobæus, Varro, Cicero, Seneca,[1] Plutarch in passages innumerable, and, above all, the incomparable Epictetus. Join to these the ingenuous confession and contemplation of Galen,[2] who was no bigot. And if Epicurus and his poet[3] suppose the Supreme Being exempt from the solicitudes of sublunary things, he no where denies His existence, or if he any where seems to doubt of it, what should we expect from one that lived and died a madman! So true is that of the orator: "*Esse Deos qui negat, vix eum sanæ mentis existimem.*"[4] Agreeable to that of holy David's,

"The fool hath said in his heart."

So naturally do all wise men and sober agree on this topic of whatever Religion they are.

From the philosophers turn we to the poets, who were of old their divines and prophets. How frequent are their raptures, invocations, and sentences to our purpose! Witness their Orpheus, the most ancient: Hesiod, Homer, Menander, &c., of the Greeks;[5] Virgil, Ovid, Lucan, &c., of the Latins, describing the crea-

[1] Cic. De Nat. Deor.; Sen. De Vit. Beal; Nat. Quæst.

[2] Gal. De Usu. Part.

[3] Lucret. 9.

[4] "The man, who denies that there is a God, I can scarce account in his senses."

[5] Phocylides, Sophocles, Euripides.

tion of the world and the formation of man. Nay, the very loosest of the comedians, tragedians, satirists among the Latins, universally speaking of the Deity with all reverence; accusing and scourging the impieties of an evil age by their pious instructions, sentences, and encomiums of virtue.

So general was the consent of Pagans as to this article of a Deity, who made and governed the world, that rather than be thought to have none, or fearing they might miss of the true one, they embraced multitudes, and took in all animals and inanimate things—stones, plants, trees, rivers; they had *Dii nobiles*, and *majorum gentium*, and others innumerable, over all things, places, passions, yea, and diseases. There were other commentitious deities; not as so many divine or distinct substances, but manifestations, and several notions of one divine power. For, otherwise, so various were they, that Plato said he knew not what to call Venus—whether goddess or not: for she is sometimes taken for Pleasure, otherwhiles for Divine Love, Beauty, Sensuality, Fecundity: and the several operations of their *optimus maximus* were attributed to Vulcan, Bacchus, Ceres, &c. And besides the sun and moon, they admitted all the constellations, the elements, all things in Nature, and inventors of every art: and, lest there should any slip from them, they captivated the very images of the countries which they subdued;[1] for so the Romans; whilst the Greeks worshipped[2] "the Un-

[1] See Jeremiah, xliii., 12.

[2] Acts, xvii., 23.

known God," lest any of the rest should take it ill, and think themselves neglected.

But not to insist on what the heathen acknowledge, even the devils themselves believe and tremble, and are forced to confess Him, not only in our Scriptures, those oracles of the true God, but (to the confusion of his own dominion and false worship) from his own tripod, and the many idol-temples, where he had so long blinded and deluded the world. The images and shrines they adored; the altars they erected; their superstitious rites, ceremonies, and sacrifices, were manifest proofs of their devotion to some superior that could do them good and evil, seeing it was not to the statues they addressed their prayers and paid this honour (as St. Augustine[1] makes plain by several instances) as to what they represented. Nor were they themselves so stupidly ignorant, to think the stone or metal was otherwise a god, than the fig-tree stump was Mercury.

Another undeniable mark is their oaths, execrations, appeals, and prayers; whence Zeno truly infers that, however an Atheist passes his life, his prayers (being in pain, and ready to die) confute his impious professions, and the signal judgments usually befalling them. Examples of this were the catastrophes of Diagoras, Protagoras, and Julian of old,[2] Vaninus,[3] and some

[1] De Civ. Dei, lib. ix.

[2] [Protagoras is reported to have been shipwrecked: Julian, the Apostate Emperor, to have exclaimed, when dying on the battle-field, "Thou, O, Galilean, hast conquered."]

[3] [Lucilio Vanini, a determined atheist, was burnt at Toulouse, A.D. 1619.]

(but very few) others of later times, who may be accorded as prodigies in nature, *phenomena* rarely appearing, seldom met with in history, and to be looked upon as monsters rather than men. But of this more, when we come to speak of natural religion.

Doubts and mistakes proceed not so much from the things or objects themselves, as from their not being rightly proposed to our understanding, in regard of the many prejudices which arise from things external, that pervert and vitiate the truth. And when we fancy that immense world of fire, the sun, to be no bigger than it to us appears—that a square tower at a distance is round—that parallel lines extended beyond our ken touch at the extremes, and the like—I say, it is through some such hallucination that all our doubtful inquiries concerning the existence of a Deity proceed, and not from any general or natural principle, but such solitary ones as are plainly erroneous and sophisticate—education, power, interest, passion, example, imagination, eloquence, and whatsoever other circumstances bear any false colours or reasonings.

There have been (among some of these) who pretend the being of a Deity to have been the invention of cunning politicians, to intimidate men, and reduce them to discipline and obedience, for the better government of the world. But this is very foolish. Not Numa nor Lycurgus could have persuaded the people to embrace the belief of the being of a just God with any success, had they not been before inclined to it already; since

it was the creed long before we read of any legislator (Moses excepted) or governor in the world: and sundry barbarous nations do yet believe and adore a God, who have hardly any notion of reward or punishment. And to acknowledge such deities as the Heathen did, was rather pernicious to government than advantage; and, therefore, whoever of these pseudo-politicians persuaded men there were any gods, on that account, they could not form nor create any such notion, without supposing it already in every man by nature. Wherefore, neither did Moses himself ever suppose it necessary to inculcate that belief into the people of Israel, as concluding it impossible for any rational man to believe the contrary.

We have affirmed, and 'tis evident, that all we behold above us and beneath us, all we touch, and contemplate round about us, point to the Supreme author. And supposing (but not granting) that what we are obliged to believe from those objects were not the objects of our common senses, yet may it be as certain as that which is; seeing there are innumerable things certain as to their existence, the natures of which are incapable of explanation.

We feel, and are affected with pain—we smell, and are sensible of odours, annoyed with such as are noisome and fetid—we are delighted with harmonious, displeased with harsh and discordant sounds, and the like of all other objects of the tactile senses; whilst we cannot explicate how these different sensations are made, or by what contrivance in the organ. It is abundantly

evident that we have proofs irrefragable, and which need not any so deep and philosophical researches. The Genesis of the world, and stupendous works of the creation—the Providence, government, and maintenance of this mighty machine, the structure of our own bodies and reason, and the deductions she must of necessity make from these particulars, proclaim it aloud to all mankind; and there needs no other demonstration.

God (says Seneca) is all we see and all we see not; for, whether there be any other middle-natures besides those inanimate, sensitive, animal, rational, or more intellectual and metaphysical beings, which both daily experience and history discover to us, is not so evident indeed to our senses, as highly probable to our reason, and conformable to the analogy of nature.

It were strange that those vast and numerous regions and bodies above us should be desert and devoid of inhabitants; whilst we find nothing so contemptible here beneath in the lower world but what is full of life and motion; from the elephant, whale, and eagle, in the earth, water, air, to the most minute and despicable insect that crawls. Nor doubt I but as the inferior, so the superior continents may be furnished with living, and (for aught we know) intelligent creatures and species, annexing the elementary world to the celestial and etherial, even through all the illustrious orders of the heavenly hierarchy, as by a chain and series of causes, to the cause of causes itself.

Thus the little stream and smallest brook hastens to

the more ample river through innumerable meanders, the river takes its way to the seas—thus the branch to the stem, the stem to the root, and that to its first and seminal rudiment. The being of mankind had thus its first origin, with retrospect from ancestor to ancestor, till we arrive at the first man from whom they sprung. Now, though it be necessary and absolutely essential that his Creator be without beginning, as he is infinite and without ending: 'tis not so of the world or man, as we shall show:

To continue this chase, there is, we find, a first and last in everything in nature, nay, in imagination also, whether we will argue from the succession of men, or the peopling of countries, the production and nativity of plants, foundation of empires, edification of cities, and other artificial works; seeing there were in all these a first father, a first colony, a first seed, first sovereign, first stone, a first hand which laid that stone, and superstructed or framed the engine.

And thus, by a familiar instance, the hammer is raised by a wheel, that wheel by a consequence of other wheels; those are moved by a spring, pendule, or poise, which first gives motion to the first wheel, and, lastly, is that spring wound or drawn up by some hand which was the prime and original agent; actuated by nerves, those nerves invigoured with spirits, originated in the brain, prompted by the fancy, the understanding will, and other faculties of the soul, by a first and immediate mover, of itself immoveable from anything extrinsecal, before or above it, in time or power—

namely, that intelligence which moves and directs the great clock of the universe.

Thus, what has no beginning must be eternal, and that which is eternal was always the same it is, and ever shall be; for were anything precedent to it, it were the thing we seek. But, seeing something must be first, that thing or Being must be God: nor may mankind or any being be deprived of that Being, but by some superior and more puissant Being or motion; nor can it annihilate its being of itself, unless by some being greater than itself, and it were absurd to suppose it otherwise, and would involve us in the same circle.

SECTION II. BY THE CREATION.

The stupendous machine of the universe, which God unfolded in his creature, is another inference so convincing of the existence of a Deity, as that Zamblicus will have the simple contemplation of it, a very beholding of God Himself with our eyes, and touching Him with our hands; not as fancying it to be the real God we are speaking of, as some imagined, since, if so, the world, and what we see, must have been eternal, and made itself (which is absurd, and what we shall refute) but for its being composed and framed with such admirable skill, wisdom, order, and magnificence, as takes off all pretence of doubting, and is so palpable an argument, that St. Paul (preaching to the Gentiles) thinks it sufficient to convince the learned Athenians,[1]

[1] Acts, xvii., 24.

and no less knowing Romans,[1] where he tells them that God has evidently demonstrated it to them, "being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead." And thus Heraclius shows to Hermadorus how the world, in its structure and ornament, gave testimony of a Deity. And those, who did less consider it, did yet grope after it, and could not devise how so goodly a structure should be raised, without something to move the materials, and dispose them into that wondrous order; and therefore introducing a certain divine mind, they held it to pervade the universe, from whose activity all effects were first produced.

As for those lazy philosophers, who left all to chance and atoms, they are rather objects of derision, than worthy of dispute: for Epicurus, with all his fortunate encounters and coalitions, is driven to suppose strange hooks, figures, and claws, to make his system hang together, and preserve his world from endless change. For that there should be a constant and uniform specification, males and females, in such proportion, and not every moment jumble into new and anomalous ones, is not easy to conceive, without allowing the component principles to have either sense or quality, nor letting us know whence their motions do proceed. But that, though they were the originals of all, themselves had none; and so make them gods, whilst he denies there be any, at least such as are at all concerned with things of this nature.

And upon this substruction does the late Des Cartes

[1] Rom., i., 19, 20.

raise his renowned edifice, making, by the mutual attritions of his atoms, the globular ones to compose the celestial bodies, and their *chips*, or *filings*, as it were, to be the *materia subtilis* diffused through the universe, filling up the chinks and interstices, and giving motion and action, not only to the animal kingdom, (which he will have but dead and senseless engines) but to all things else in nature. He will have God contribute nothing more to the creation of the world, than the whirling of innumerable vortices, globes, and striate particles; from whose casual motions (according to certain catholic and universal laws of matter) there proceed all animates and inanimates whatsoever, without the conduct of any understanding Being, Wisdom, or Providence.[1]

Let us suppose the production of mankind from his atoms. How principles of life and sense should emerge, without a vital nature, and a virtue of attracting to itself a substance proper to frame the *Individuum*, is altogether inconceivable, seeing it must of necessity contain likewise the faculty of that formative act, by which the matter is moulded, and made conform to its specific nature. And, finally, it must have all the same powers and energies of the rational soul, as our late

[1] Similarly the *Hylo-zoists* held every atom of matter to be endowed with a plastic, spermatic life; and though unconscious, yet capable of producing all things; nay, and to improve them into animality and sense, yea, reason and understanding, without need of any incorporeal substance. Epicurus and Democritus, who made the world but ὠὸν τῆς νυκτός, an egg of one night, did not allow any such thing as incorporeal, but space.

grave and learned Hales[1] has elaborately made out, examining the opinions of our wild philosophers, who state the *original* of things either *ab æterno*, or indeed any other cause, save the pleasure of a wise and omnipotent Being.

Did ever any see a picture representing a history, in which divers actions and persons were judiciously designed, placed, and coloured; the lights, shades, perspectives, and other circumstances of that curious art exactly observed, such as we see to be the works of Raphael, Titian, &c., and not believe some such skilful artist had managed the pencil? Was it likely the Iliad of Homer, the commentaries of J. Cæsar, or the vaster works of Livy, Plutarch, or Cicero, were composed by the fortuitous jumbling together of a printer's box of letters? The world is a poem—the most perfect and consummate piece that ever was made; and did no more happen by chance than stones do dig themselves out of the quarry, not only squared and adjusted to every part and ornament of a regular building, but, according to the rules of architecture, form themselves into the five orders, and dance into a palace at the sound of the harp. Nor do trees hew themselves into beams, boards, and wainscot; nor tiles pin and lay themselves upon the rafters; nor does glass blow itself into panels, and with other materials, which require art to bring them into use, erect themselves into houses, churches, and whole cities, with all their various furniture; nor do ships grow equipped with all

[1] Origin of Mankind.

their tackle and apparel, rigged and ready to sail; nor find we clocks and watches, with all their subtile wheels, and curious springs and motions, in the mines of brass and iron, without the labour and excogitation of an intelligent artist. And if we acknowledge that every house, ship, and watch, so fitted and completely finished, was the work of some man, shall we not much more conclude that this far more exact system of the Universe (so admirably contrived beyond all that the art of man can boast of skill and cunning), was made by some Omnipotent and infinitely wise Agent? But so our modern wits, who never yet so much as saw one atom or grain of dust start up into being out of nothing, will have them to frame the world, and, without patience to consider wit, or honesty, persist in this madness, and think thereby to ridicule all Religion as well as sense and reason. But as the wise man has noted: "*So vain are all men by nature, who are ignorant of God, and cannot (or rather, will not), out of the good things that are seen, know Him that is, neither by considering the works, acknowledge the work-master. For by the greatness and beauty of the Creature, proportionably the Maker of them is seen.*"[1]

Of how depraved a sense must needs one be to think that Chance was the producer of intellectual substances, and devised so many beautiful and useful inventions, and gave them an understanding to effect that which Chance itself could not, namely, impart that power and faculty to another it never was possessed of! No, this

[1] Wisd. xiii. 1-5.

noble and illustrious work, cemented in its various parts, and cast into the system we behold it, was doubtless limited and determined to the forms assumed. Nor could its component matter form and actuate itself without some impulse and impression separate from its matter. If self-motion be essential to matter, it must of necessity have been coeval, and in it *ab acterno*, which is not possible. For, if there be no atom in repose but what naturally is in motion, then the principles of Epicurus are corruptible, because divisible. If of no parts and indivisible, then have they no extension, and if no extension no power to form anything, much less to make a world.

Moreover, does matter move? Then it takes up place, and consequently has parts, figure being a determined superficies. Again, if motion result from the principles of matter, how comes this motion (infinite and variable as it is) to be determined to such a form, such order, and in so regular a method and economy, for so many ages, without relapsing into chaos and confusion; seeing there is no natural or essential necessity that either matter should at all exist, move, or determine itself to such particular form, but by some casual encounter or superior directing cause? The first is childishly ridiculous, for chance is either nothing or something created. If something created, then had it a beginning; if none, then must it be something distinct from matter, eternal, and self-existent; and so is what we contend for, namely, the First Cause, which is God, the Cause of Causes. But, if Chance be nothing save

a name—*vox et præterea nihil*—how monstrously absurd were it to affirm that nothing created something, nay, all that ever was created! whereas, if there had ever been nothing, nothing could ever have been. Something, therefore, must be which never was made, namely, self-originated[1] and eternal.

That, in the mean time, God, who is something, nay, who is all things, created all things out of nothing, implies no contradiction, though to us inexplicable, *ex nihilo nil*, excluding no supernatural production, but natural generation only. Theophrastus doubted not of this, and Seneca acknowledged a Chaos, so did Linus, Hesiod, and even the very Indians, as did the Egyptians long before, something of a sluggish, pre-existent matter, which was held from the consideration of things artificial, that supposes something out of which all things were made.

But, from the weakness and imbecility of the creature, to argue the same of the Omnipotent, were to betray a greater weakness in us, and want of reason. When, therefore, it is affirmed that nothing produces nothing, we must conceive it of natural causes, raised out of our experience of successive generations, which indeed must necessarily have some being before the things arising from them had being. For though, since that time, all plants have sprung from their seeds, and animals from their parents, &c.; yet was there doubtless a plant which bore and produced that seed, and parents to beget that offspring. Hence the opinion that the whole Universe

[1] Αυτόφυες.

was at first but one great egg, of which the shell was the vast expanse, the air the white, and the earth its yoke. And some affirmed it of an *oval* form also, and made it symbolical of the world,[1] as may be gathered from the Phœnician philosophy, Plutarch,[2] Macrobius, Proclus, and the Platonists, agreeable to the incubation of an indulgent Spirit, which some of them gave hints of. We shall not trouble ourselves with that impertinent question, which was the first, the egg, or the chick (as some have done); but this we find, that God created every plant of the ground in its full vigour and perfection, prolific and ready to yield increase, and so the fowls before we hear of any disclosure of the eggs. The womb of animals also was made before a child was born; and sundry things, as Heaven, Earth, Angels, and Souls, and elemental bodies, were the immediate production of Almighty God, as other things *mediately* from things pre-created, namely, out of the Earth and Waters, as birds, beasts, fishes, and plants, and even man himself.

In the mean time, 'tis as hard to conceive how matter (or anything out of which anything is made) should rise and result out of itself, as out of nothing, and altogether incomprehensible that senseless materials should be their own architectresses to the degree of furnishing such a world of things as are daily the objects of our senses. I say, this is a strain of wit so extravagant, and, in plain terms, so impossible, that, should it once be

[1] Plut. In Sympos., i. 2.

[2] Plut. In Sympos., l. 4. Macrob., l. 7, c. 16.

seriously embraced, would not only bring to ground all our mechanical philosophers, but all that we have been taught of good sense and religion.

That God made all things from nothing is yet certainly true, and even demonstrably so, or else there can be no such Being as God. For, if there be such a thing, then of necessity there must be that principle, which created the first thing; and, if He did not make the first thing, then there is something besides Him, and which never was made; and, if so, then there are two first or two Eternal Beings.

Wherefore, if God formed the *first* thing, he formed it of nothing. One, then, of these propositions must be true: either nothing was before something existent, or was not. If it were (though but one single moment), then was there never anything, or ever could be since; because nothing could produce nothing; and, to produce itself before it was, is not only absurd, but impossible. Therefore, of necessity, something had an actual existence from all eternity; self-subsisting and giving being, immediately or mediately, to all subordinate beings. And this independent Being is only necessary; all the rest contingent and at his pleasure.

On the other side, ascribe we all to Nature, and mean not the God of nature, is to split on the same rock. Nature, therefore, (in the large sense) is that which comprehends the entire virtue of all finite beings, subordinated to the first of Beings, and which, according to the ordinary course, are regulated by certain constant and uniform laws; and so the course of nature

is no other than the will and pleasure of the God of nature. Indeed, God does not do all things in nature immediately; but governs the motion of matter to the form designed, whilst that matter does not understand the reason of what it does, nor for what end, being wholly guided to that by a mental and wise causality. Things, then, have their primogenital being from the supernatural power of God, who imprinted on them all their specific ideal signatures and animal efficacies; so ordered, and setting in motion second causes, as to bring together apt materials for the composition of the several species. And, when once they are in this method of existence, they afterwards move and act according to the nature and course of life and progress, minted and stamped upon them in their first creation.

This is nature, nor has she any further hand or intent in any of those operations ascribed to her; and, in this sense, we may safely have recourse to, and speak of second causes without reproach; since they are but the Almighty's instruments, ordinary and natural Providences—unless where things and effects are so very extraordinary, as the wisest and most considering persons cannot sound and discern the reason, or are otherwise altogether stupendous, just as miraculous works, and things supernaturally happening; while our atheistical devotees to Dame Nature (though what they pretend be with the greatest violence imaginable to all reason, experience, and indeed to the very laws and sanctions of nature) think it, forsooth, beneath their wit and high-flown reach to acknowledge any other

efficient than what is the object of their senses, and form their conclusions accordingly of all things else.

Once more, then, nature (in a more restrained sense, and as she more nearly concerns our enquiries) may be said to be the power and capacity of matter, as that power (we said) is conducted by the same steady and constant ordinance by which she acts and disposes of it, Matter being, of itself, as to any interior principle, stupid, immoveable, and uncertain, till agitated by some superior virtue exterior to it. And this philosophers call *motion*, and is that which, dividing this stupid and heavy lump, does also figure and modify all that we with so much worthy admiration contemplate in this aspectable world; and which, without this mover, had still remained substantial matter and bulk indeed, and in capacity of being moved by another; but never thus diversified for beauty and usefulness, and might as well have been a deformed and rugged rock.

But, supposing that matter were endued with any necessary motion, yet being without mind, purpose, thought, or counsel: though that motion might possibly have separated the mass, it could never have produced any useful figure, regular and organic species, with those several and admirable accommodations, with all the train of subordinate circumstances, and orderly effects of necessity belonging to them.

Moreover, this unexcogitated division would also have been illimited, and never left crumbling and mouldering away; having nothing to hinder, nothing to maintain it. Wherefore that motion which has given

this impulse to matter, and brought it to this beautiful and firm contexture, is (whether we will or not), that prime, superior, and noble cause, the Father of Nature, Matter, and Motion; the Omnipotent central Being of Beings.

Nor was it other than God's goodness and free benevolence, which was the cause of what He has wrought; no intrinsic necessity, no, not of doing the good He continually does, and daily pours upon His work. For though his own nature be the most benign, the emanations and exercises of it, as to His creatures, are directed by His own free will and favour; seeing otherwise He could make nothing worse or better. Indeed, there be who will have Him to be a *necessary* cause, and yet a *voluntary*, and that He does always what is best, because it is of His perfection to do so, namely, to communicate of His bounty to something without Him, from the eternal beneficence of His nature. But this is inconsistent with the necessity they pretend; seeing necessary agents have no more power at any time to suspend their activity, than fire to burn and heat. To imagine, therefore, this of God, were to deprive Him of understanding and the exercise of His power, wisdom, and will, which alone created all, and can do all things.

Thus have we examined the invalidity of that precarious fancy, that unthinking matter should fall by chance, or act necessarily (when once in motion) into this orderly figure; or that it should retain any innate perfection, beside a bulky magnitude, much less an

infinite perfection, such as eternity and all those other divine attributes, incommunicable and needful for the work of creation. We have likewise showed the work of nature to be the work of reason, not of created nature; that without diversity, separation, and union of parts, nothing can be made, and that this separation being the effect of motion, and not competent to matter of itself, does of necessity require some hand or power to actuate it. It is likewise evident, that no part could produce the whole: that the world could not make itself; that without sense, excogitation, and purpose, things so orderly contrived could never have been created; and that, therefore, this principle is something extrinsical, and nothing from within common matter. Lastly, that nothing is or can be eternal, but in the idea of the Almighty: and that to make matter produce itself is to make that God which is no God, but to Atheists and impious men without God in the world.

But we now descend to particulars. The contemplation of this vast and goodly machine, how loudly it bespeaks us in the language of the Royal Prophet, the "glory of God and His handy-work."[1] Behold here a demonstration, O, Atheist! if nothing save daily miracles will convince thee, here thou hast to entertain thy infidel curiosity.

Whether it be[2] the position, course, or order of the sun, or other luminaries' motion, or that of the earth; or the

[1] Psalm xix.

[2] See "Dr. Taylor's Consideration of Man."

sweet influences of the Pleiades, Orion and his sons, or other refulgent constellations, which give light, growth, and vigour to all the lower world, and (for aught we know) to ten thousand more above us;—their order, progress, immense magnitude, distance, and inconceivable spaces, comprehending perhaps many million of greater bodies, and likely habitations and continents, serving to the Almighty's vast design,—are the astonishing wonders, which proclaim that nothing but an infinitely wise and all-powerful agent could raise a machine so useful, glorious, and immense. Nor is it possible that all those glorious and infinite number of distant globes should have nothing in them to praise their omnipotent Maker; since Christ has said that in His Father's House are many mansions, who framed the world to communicate his own infinite beneficence, and that there might be other Beings happy with Him: "O Israel, how great is the house of God, and how large is the place of his possession!" [1]

Who without amazement can consider the self-poising earth, and the other celestial bodies we look upon, without other prop to sustain them in the liquid air, or more subtile ether? Contemplate we the periodical returns of the equinoxes and solstices—the just distance of the sun—the interposition of atmosphere, qualifying and attempering the fiery emanations of that burning ocean, to a just and benign warmth, for the comfort and production of those innumerable species, to which it imparts growth, maturity, and life; in a word, the universal

[1] Baruch, iii. 24.

benefit of the elementary world! Behold, next, his oblique motion, whereby he visits every part and region, by which the grosser exhalations are meteorized, circulated, and condensed into clouds, and sustained by the atmosphere; both to shadow and refresh the weary ground, descending in fruitful showers, softening and impregnating the teeming earth! The snow, hail, ice, and frosts, subdue and mellow the stubborn clods, keeping the native warmth within from dissipation, whose virtue else would soon be exhausted by the perpetually burning planet! Then behold the sun in the firmament and centre of the heavens; the subterranean fires in the bosom and centre of the earth, to prepare and concoct the mineral juices, and other concretes for useful metals, gems, and other precious substances, stones, shells, and colours: qualifying also the waters for nutriment, medicinal drinks, and salutary baths, and a thousand other purposes; whilst the seasons, not passing from one extreme to the other, but sweetly, and by imperceptible degrees, slide as it were from winter to spring, from spring to summer, from thence to harvest and fruitful autumn, in a wonderful economy; and by a no less admirable Providence all things are preserved, which else would have been inverted, disturbed, and lost; since things so contrary could never have met to make up this harmony and perfection.

The restless ebbing and flowing of the seas, observing the course of the lunar phases; their enigmatical currents, fluxes, and reciprocations; and how they were contrived to irrigate and refresh all the parts of the

earth, in rivers and larger streams; made to serpent in meandering crooks, not only to check their rapid course, but kindly to visit the most inland parts; and are fitted for navigation and commerce of distant nations. The havens too, and creeks, and bending shores and bays, are stations for ships, impelled by various winds. These not only ventilate the air, and stir the water from unwholesome stagnations, and give motion to mills and other useful engines, but help the bold mariner to plough the vast and liquid main, and bring him to the haven where he would be. And when the storm arises, and the proud waves swell, the shores are a curb to their fury. *Thus far shalt thou come, and no farther.* But who can number the sands of the sea? He, only, to whom earth and sea are as a drop of the bucket, and the dust of the balance. "For the sea is His, and He made it, and His hands prepared the dry land."[1] "All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, and the fishes of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas;"[2] innumerable for multitude, stupendous for shape and magnitude, and incomparable for use and benefit. Thus every place is garnished and furnished; nor has God made anything in vain; nothing is defective, nothing superfluous.

Take we next a prospect of the earth's surface, and behold from the lofty mountains how the humble valleys are clothed with verdure, goodly trees, and variety of plants and flowers. These serve for building, fuel,

[1] Psalm xcv., 5. [2] Psalm viii., 7, 8.

fruit, and medicine, and for the sustenance of those who cultivate them. Consider but the rudiment of a tall and umbrageous tree, from so minute a seed as may be borne away by every blast, or carried to the hold of an insect less than itself, increasing to so immense a stature as a hundred oxen cannot move. The shady boughs, verdant leaves, useful timber, delicious juices, wholesome fruits. Then turn your eyes to the enamelled grass, and read God on every flower: see and admire their uniformity, beauty, colour, variety, perfume, virtue, which who could give them, but an infinitely wise and glorious Being? Is it possible to contemplate the single production of one of these, without astonishment and hymns of praise? Whilst the head and root of all this flowery beauty is hid and buried in squalid mud, enduring all the severities of weather, and even emerging out of rottenness into that ravishing variety of shape, tincture, odour, qualities, and operations! The cocoa alone is a miraculous instance, fitted for all human uses, meat, drink, clothing, shelter, and a thousand other conveniences!

Who but the Physician of Souls were able to enumerate the virtues and effects of the vegetable kingdom? The various sorts of apples, pears, cherries, apricots, peaches, nectarines, plums, grapes, and smaller berries; the orange, lemon, fig, granate, melon, sugar-cane; and all these even in one alone, the royal pine—a compendium of all that is delicious to the taste and smell. That from so weak, despicable, and useless stem as what supports the vine, planted among the

rocks and pumices, such variety of delicious and tempting juices should flow! corn to strengthen, and wine to comfort the heart of man, and oil to make him a cheerful countenance! Behold the odoriferous cedar, the tall fir, and spreading oak, the shady plane, the upright and victorious palm, the beautiful cypress; and among the more humble shrubs, the myrtles, jasmines, laurels, honeysuckles, healing balms, and sensitive plants, &c.

Walk then a turn into the flowery *parterres* of roses, lilies, tulips, anemones, amaranths, frittillarias, gentianellas, hepaticas, and carnations; together with the aromatic spikes, thymes, &c.; all these, and thousands more, dressed, figured, fringed, folded, miniated and decked by the hand of Him who made the heavens; nor was Solomon, in all his glory, clad like one of these.

Demand, next, of the beasts of the field, and even they shall teach thee—the fowls of the air, and they shall instruct thee—and the fishes of the sea, they shall declare unto thee, Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this?[1] The whale, which God has made to take his pastime in the vast ocean, among innumerable spawns, producing that variety of fishes and crooked serpents: who can consider the crustaceous kinds—the lobster, armed cap-à-pie, crabs, tortoise, in their fortress-shells, without admiration! The beaver, crocodile, and hippopotamus, are amphibious: the behemoth, rhinoceros, docile elephant, the useful horse, camel, dromedary, for speedy carriage

[1] Job, xii., ix.

and courage: the painful, strong, and patient ox, for labour; the fleece-bearing sheep; cows for milk; goats, deer, and other cattle, upon a thousand hills.

In deserts lurks the spotted leopard, the swift tiger, indomitable panther, bears, wolves, and foxes; and those most in the colder climates, affording furs and skins. The wild boar is in the forest; the squirrels on the trees; the faithful and watchful dog, domestic; the mimicing apes divert us; and above all these, for strength, are the lions, seeking their meat of God; and so do the young ravens that call upon Him; the towering eagles, hawks, and birds of prey; the loquacious parrot, the sagacious crane, pious stork, architectress swallow, chaste dove, warbling nightingale, glorious peacock, thrushes, linnets, canaries, and other singing birds, their wonderful notes, nidifications, trains, and plumage.

These, and infinite more, are fed with flesh, grain, fruits, flies, of which latter there is stupendous variety, for shape, colour, and contrivance: consider but the strength of the minutest gnat, piercing with his invisible dart the thickest skin, and drawing blood through his proboscis; hear his trumpet, sounding from so small a pipe: for him lies in wait the subtle spider, displaying her nets for the surprise. From the wise serpent to the crawling worm, they are all endowed with wonderful instincts, to propagate, defend, and preserve themselves: nor is there among them the least mite or peper-worm, (that dust of a creature, whereof fifty thousand are contained in one drop) but is for food to

some other creature; and we extract antidotes out of vipers, and sanative remedies from the poisonous cantharides.

What shall we say of the monarchical bee, and the dulcet elixir she so industriously gathers and stives in her admirably contrived and waxen city; the government of her numerous subjects: or, again, the order and economy of the little ant, to which Solomon sends the sluggard? Can we look on the laborious silkworm, from an egg no bigger than a grain of sand, through all its wonderful changes, life, death, sepulchre, and resurrection, without astonishment! how, with her tender web, she clothes the proudest potentate, and without whose spoils the height of their glory would be but from the common fleece, which covers the beggar as warm as the king! The *murex* yields us purple, and a despicable worm the scarlet, which gives reverence to princes. It were endless and plainly impossible to continue the recension through remote countries and the New World, or to take an account of every creature that came into the ark of Noah. Millions there are we hardly take notice of, and some so small, as to elude the most accurate microscope. All things are full of life; and the least of these framed with admirable proportion, fitted to their several natures and distinct organs. Thus are seen through the mirror of Creation the *magnalia* of God in His smallest works. All things, as the wise man says, are double one against another, and He has made nothing imperfect, but one thing for the good of another; and who shall be filled with be-

holding His glory?[1] In sum, we may speak much, and yet come short: wherefore He is All.

But there are yet greater things than these; for we have seen but a few of His works, till we have seen and considered Man, the last, though not the least, of the Creation: the Almighty proceeding still to more perfection, and because he designed a place and habitation richly furnished for him that was to be the image and bear the character of his glorious Maker, and to raise his admiration to contemplate and delight in the bounty of his gracious Benefactor.

Consider we, first, the structure of his body, upright stature, majesty, charming countenance, ravishing eyes, and variety of features. Let us search within his head for the seat of his superior faculties. That so fluid and unlikely a substance, placed in the several cells, should pretend to the residence of his sense, reason, memory, imagination; and be the shop and magazine of those wonderful ideas. The velocity of the motion, which carries its mandate over the rest of the body, even to the most distant members, in a moment of time; and retaining so many different notions of things, figures, persons, places, and be able to reposite and draw forth for use and in order; and then to express his mind by articulate sounds and eloquent speech, for society, conversation, and the praise of his Maker; and all these faculties contained in so small a fortress as the head, is plainly miraculous.

Let us consider how these several senses, sent out by

[1] Ecclus., xlii., 24, 25.

the soul to speculate abroad, report what they find, by the central touches and perceptive notices darted from every atom, and the surface of various objects, on the exquisitely fine, innumerable, and universally dispersed nerves and membranes that invest them; whose root is in the brain, where (as we said) all our conceptions are forged, our appetites and passions excited and regulated.

Look into the fabric of the eye only, for an instance of the rest of the sensitive organs. The humours and tunicles are transparent, to let in colours, and therefore tinctured with none themselves. The parts of the eye convex, to let in the many rays proceeding from one point of the object to the bottom of the eye. Then has the *uvea* a muscular power, to contract and dilate that perforation in it called the *pupil*, thereby moderating the transmission of light. Then is the inside of the *uvea* black, that the rays, falling on the *retina*, may not, by rebounding on the *uvea*, revert on the *retina* again, and so, by repercussion, confound the light. Then follows the *tunica arachnoides*, enveloping the *crystalline*, by help of the *ciliary processes*, to thrust forward or draw back the useful part of the organ, as the vicinity or distance of the object requires. Lastly, the *tunica velina* is made purely white, the better to receive the *species*, as black letters are better distinguished on white paper. We might proceed to describe the wonderful effects and contrivances of the several muscles which direct its several motions; the quick motion of the eyelids, to preserve them from injury: and, after the same manner, how the tactile,

auditory, and olfactory senses, and that of the taste, are excogitated: but, to speak a little of each, would require a volume, not a chapter.

We cannot yet pass by the hand, that instrument so indetermined to any operation, and universally useful, but we will suspend it till we come to speak of Providence, which will be another topic of conviction to our atheist. Innumerable are the uses of this *organon organorum*,[1] as the philosopher calls it.

And verily we must acknowledge it altogether stupendous, and superior to what any other creature can pretend to. He calls it (and that rightly) not *one*, but *all instruments*, and is in a kind of rapt and admiration at the curious mechanism of the fingers,[2] adapted to so many intricate conveniences. And in earnest, when we consider the wonderful motions of the spine and several vertebræ of the human skeleton, composed of so many integrals, among the joints and bones, the irriguous and meandering veins, their sluices, valves, &c. The pulse of arteries, conjugation of nerves, divaricated into so infinite a number of capillary vessels, so wisely and copiously disposed for the perception of the most delicate touch! When we contemplate how the chyle is made into blood; the blood accended, circulated, refined, spiritualized, distributed, assimilated, and copiously diffused; when one reflects on the perpetual vibrations of the heart, moving so many years; the functions of the liver, spleen, gall, kidneys, and other

[1] Aristotle, De Part. An., c. 30.

[2] Lact. De Opif. Dei., c. 10.

intestine cleansers: or examine the connexion of the joints, and their numberless flexures; that at the least six hundred several muscles belong to our bodies, on which attend ten distinct intentions (namely, to each so many) amounting in the total to six thousand various purposes and ends to be considered; and that of the bones to be of a hundred thousand; to say no more of the minuter contextures of all those other parts of the body, with what curious stamina and threads the whole is woven and knit together, we cannot be to seek for a demonstration that there went something more than chance, or ordinary power, to the framing of so beautiful, so useful, so admirable a creature.

We have said nothing of the astonishing contrivance of other parts; how the teeth are ordained, some to cut, others to grind the meat, and fit it for the stomach, after the tongue and palate have passed their censure; nor how it is there concocted and transmitted into the *viscera*, and by what mysterious actions and various ferments it is drawn and distributed, for the supply of blood, spirits, and other juices and humours necessary to preserve the body: whilst the lungs maintain a perpetual stream of breath and air, to temper and refrigerate the heart—that shop of life, which maintains that intercourse with the brain, and, through the recurrent nerves, gives motion to the muscular system, in obedience to the dictates of the mind.

Who is able to trace the stupendous circulation of the blood, its perpetual flux and reflux, both to carry that elaborated and noble juice to the most distant vessels,

and to preserve it from stagnation? But, above all, the miraculous economy of the several offices serving for propagation, and that, from such unlikely rudiments, the species should be continued, and endowed with faculties, vegetable, sensitive, rational, so stupendously united; and with innate sentiments, improvable to the perfecting of a rational life. How this embrion is irradiated, how nourished, produced, and perfected, is a subject of contemplation that can enter nowhere but in the highest wisdom, and a Providence altogether divine. Well might Galen,[1] then, have raised that noble thought on this so noble a work, as indeed he has; and, therefore, Justin Martyr tells us that, in his time, even among the heathen, there was an express hymn in use, to celebrate in particular the creation of man; accounting religion and true piety not to consist in sacrifices, hecatombs, and costly incense; but in recognition and declaration of God's infinite power and beneficence in adorning the world with such a goodly creature, and making such great variety, without envying good to anything capable of His bounty. And on this account it is, that Maximus Tyrius exhorts men to contemplate God, and lifting up our minds to penetrate even beyond the visible heavens to the Invisible Deity.

Man, therefore, thus formed, endowed, and accomplished, was not made by chance, and to grovel only here; nor sprung he up from the exuberance of pregnant earth betwixt the tropics, now effete, and spent with bearing; nor, as mice and insects, from the slime

[1] De usu part.

of Nilus; which yet never anybody has seen. For who should give the tender and senseless babe the breast, and cherish the new-born infant? These are visions of poets, and the dreams of idle men. In a word, therefore, man, framed by angelic hands, erect of posture, fit to act and command, in the bloom and vigour of youth, of goodly stature, exact proportion, with quick and sparkling eyes, judicious brow, floating tresses, every feature, every motion composed and graceful, has all that the earth, air, and water can produce, to delight and serve him. The various shape of beasts, the charming notes of birds, the several sorts of fish sporting in their liquid element, the beauty of flowers, the diapered and enamelled meads, verdant grass, delicious fruits, shady trees. The resplendent sun, the orders of stars, the meandering rivers, crystal streams, the cooling frosts, the surprising heights of the rising mountains, the luxurious valleys, rocks sparkling with gems and veins of richest ore; and all these without labour but what is agreeable to his nature, and the entertainment of his contemplation. For He made us, and all these things, and not we ourselves; we are the work of His hands.

O happy sovereign, then, whose empire once was the whole world; whose palace was the spacious earth, whose canopy was the starry heavens, whose vassals were all the creatures;[1] whose food was paradisian; clothing, innocence; conversation, angels; whose law was refined reason, without passion, without fear, want,

[1] Sen. De Ben., l. iv., c. 5.

sickness, or death itself; from what happiness dost thou fall again, when thou deniest to acknowledge who it was that made thee, and gave thee all these things? What, what is man that Thou art mindful of him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels, to crown him with glory and worship! O Lord, our Governor, how excellent is Thy name in all the world! For thus the Almighty, to demonstrate His power, educed light out of darkness; raised the most noble of His creatures from the basest matter; that in all this height he might be humble here; and gave him reason, and an immortal soul, to exalt him again hereafter (for as man, without this principle, and, after all we have said, is but a beast), that neither of them should sink too low in this animal condition; that both may look up, and be assured of a more glorious state (pursuing the paths of virtue), He has distinguished him with a prerogative that sets a good man next his Maker.

To conclude, man has eyes given him, not only to see, but contemplate the astonishing fabric of the universe; and a tongue to proclaim the praise of its Creator, and understanding to comprehend His works; so as mankind seems made on purpose for His worship, and to be a curious and diligent observer of them, and speak his glory, and, in particular, his obligations to Him above all other creatures of sense without these noble faculties. This was, doubtless, the end of our being, and of all those perfections which distinguish us from them. Such active and boundless passions were

not designed to mean employments only; besides that no other creature was made capable of religion; nor is it imaginable that God would create a world, and place no creature in it, whose proper business should be to know, adore, and contemplate his wise and bountiful benefactor. Man, therefore, is the priest of nature, to offer up the praises and acknowledgments of the whole creation. Not that He (who is alone most happy in the contemplation of His own perfections) needs any accession from anything He has made, or any service we can return Him; though it be an end, not unworthy, to render His beneficence and works conspicuous, and receive the deserved honour of them from His creatures. But, seeing that none of these (man excepted) have any sense, either of their own excellency, or from whom they received what they have; as destitute of that intellectual principle which should direct them; God has ordained man (for whose use and benefit He has, in a more especial manner, designed them) to perform that duty for them which they could not of themselves; and ennobled him with those faculties, that he might be capable of and participate in fruitions commensurate to his nature. And, verily, this consideration should make us careful that we destroy not that which He has designed to a state so excellent; embase or dedecorate that transcendant principle which has placed us above the rest of His creation; namely, the *intellectual soul*, which comes next to be examined.

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SECTION III. — PART I.

BY THE SOUL OF MAN.

The soul, not the animal life which he has in common with the brutes, and is no other than a certain subtile and active flame, giving life, motion, and vigour to the whole body,—but the rational soul, I say, is the man. And the disquisition and belief of this is of that importance, and so convincing a demonstration of the Deity, that, though virtue herself were reward and encouragement sufficient for one to embrace a pious and religious life, it is absolutely necessary we should be grounded in the truth of this particular, that so we may, with more seriousness, provide for its future being and eternal state. Forasmuch as the body, or vessel, which, for a while, contains it, is but of frail and perishing matter; and it is for the sake of this other precious particle and substance only, that has obliged us to the search of all that is designed in this treatise. For irrational creatures in this are happy, that they glorify their Maker by performing those natural functions which instinct prompts them to, nor are they capable of any other.

But man, being an intellectual agent, is endowed with more sublime and noble objects; that act of understanding and volition, which is united to that fabric of man's body we have been describing. It is then by this that sensible, as well as altogether intellectual objects and mental notions, are reposited in the

memory, through such tracts of time and variety of accidents, without dissipation or confusion. And hence we may contemplate how the exercise of sense is performed in the brain, or by the soul, through the mediation of the spirits. How also visible objects are transmitted through those obscure passages between the organs and cerebel, or in what other parts of the brain it is more eminently seated. This is that *spark of life*, extending and communicating its virtue equally, even to the utmost confines of the animal nature, with the same facility in the most enormous whale and largest elephant, as in the minutest fly and mite. With how much more ease, then, does God, who is all Spirit, and the Father of Spirits, govern and actuate the universe; which, as a living but elemental body, would soon dissolve and turn to corruption (were that great soul to be absent but one moment), and perhaps be annihilated!

But we have hitherto spoken of animal life only; and, as we communicate with other living creatures, composed of flesh and blood, and in man alone connected with a sublimer substance, wholly separate from matter. Indeed, there are who wish and hope the soul were no other; and, to this end, use all the witty arguments their love of what is present is able to suggest. For, should the soul happen to survive, and, after all their labours, prove a more lasting and immaterial substance than the body and vital spirit, it would disturb them with the doubts, which not only our preachers, but philosophers of old, have constantly asserted, that some just deity, being the author

of it, will inquire hereafter how it has behaved itself, and treat it accordingly. And this apprehension of a future being not only introduces the necessity of a God, and the retribution we mention, but engages these men of pleasure to be serious, and reform their sensual lives, which, rather than they will part with, they adventure all. To establish this opinion, therefore (namely, that the human soul is nothing but refined matter), Satan, the enemy of mankind, has, both of old and now again more vigorously of late, raised up a sect, whom he has furnished with subtle arguments to maintain a *thesis* (were it possible) which would subvert all piety and religion in the world. This then it is, which we shall endeavour to oppose, as of the greatest importance in the world.

That the human soul should consist of matter is altogether incomprehensible. Since (as all consent) it acts not without *motion*, and that motion to be irregular and uncertain, how is it possible it of itself should produce a thought, or any such thing as reflection, without some exterior principle productive of the thought, while they affirm matter to be insensible, its motion variable, contingent, and changing figure to effects, that have no manner of conformity to thought? Now, if this giddy and inconstant motion be not able to produce a thought, neither can its effects. If motion of matter produce the cause of Thought, or reasoning, that cause must proceed from Motion, or else there can be none. Thought is, then, the immediate effect of motion; whilst motion produces no effect, but to range, sort, and dis-

pose matter, without immediately producing the least reflection. Besides, it is not simple matter that acts when we think; since, though its parts may act on one another, they cannot upon themselves, and reflect as thought does, and may do, to infinity.

There is, then, something in *man* distinct from *matter*, with all her motions, and which has some other source; nor can that be, but from God. For the simple existence of matter never could have produced a world, with all that admirable furniture we have described; or organized the most despicable mite, that crawls, without some exterior paramount principle to manage and direct its motion.

We find, then, in the world, an existent matter, moving in such sort, and in some portion of this matter; a *thinking principle*, not only able to reflect upon itself, but conceive things more sublime, even of spirits, and things abstracted, and which has infinite ideas, without being the results of mere matter, but something more transcendent. Add to this, that matter cannot be essentially self-existent; forasmuch as all beings must exist, either from their own existence, or some exterior principle, or, thirdly, from the perfection of their own nature. Now, the perfect existence of matter neither proves that it always had, or shall perpetuate, the same existence: seeing those moments of being have neither any natural or actual connexion by which it may subsist. If it be replied that every thing exists as it is a being, it is answered that, as nothing or no-existence, it has no being; because in effect it is nothing: whereas the

mind, or soul, be it substance or accident, is at least a being. Men believe not she always was or shall continue, because they look on it as matter, and its motion only; when yet it always might be, even by that principle. Whereas, thought, which adds something to this motion and matter, has not always been; and therefore a being, though it now exist, may not always have so been.

Nothing, as was said, has no existence, because it is nothing, and, being a simple negation, needs not any thing that it may not exist. Whereas, a Being which is positively something, exists not, but as the principle of its being subsists; which yet is not the universal quality of a being, as is evident from beings which do not always exist, but either from an efficient cause which has given it being, or from the emanation of his perfection who has exempted it from needing any thing at all. For it is not from the eminency of its own perfections that matter necessarily exists; seeing it is so remote from those perfections, that it has hardly any; but remains, as it were, *rasa tabula*, deriving all its qualities (which yet are but mixed ones) or sensations rather, from the mind than from any motion at all of matter.

We find thought indeed in some portions of matter, as it becomes perfectly organic; but then it proceeds not from mere matter; seeing whatever is in matter must either be essential to it, or accidental and acquired. Now, to think is not essential to matter, seeing all matter has no thought, nor any does acquire. For then she must have it of herself or from some other. If from

another, then it is another principle which imparts it, and that is God. If from herself, it must proceed from rest or motion: from rest it cannot be, for rest does nothing, being a cessation of all action. Nor is it from motion that matter thinks, what it did not think before; there being in motion only these four things: firstly, the thing moved; secondly, the term from whence it moves; thirdly, the place whither moved; fourthly, who or what the mover is: none of all which is thought. For were thought the result from the motion of matter, then must thought be itself that motion, or its effect; and it is not a simple motion only: forasmuch as thought, doubt, reflection, &c., is no simple transport, or *motus a quo, ad quem.* Nor is it an effect of motion, since that being but the transport *a loco ad locum* produces no other immediate effect than the situation of the thing moved; and if several *mobiles* move at the same instant, they all would encounter when they separated, fall into and produce a new order. Now, thought is neither any new situation of any body, or sensible atom, nor any new series of several atoms, greater or smaller bodies, sensible or insensible.

Moreover, did matter produce thought, it must either be from the virtue and power of motion in general, or the differences of motions, or the thing moved, or exterior differences. Now it is not from the sole power of motion, or motion in general, or as a motion producing an effect, which can create a thought; inasmuch as there are an infinity of bodies, which move without thought. Nor is it the difference of motion; because

that is diversified by slowness, swiftness, and determination. Now, since *rapidity* is but a quicker transport, and *determination* but the motion of a body inclining to one side rather than to another, it is not possible those differences should bring forth thought. Nor, finally, is it the difference of place whence it rises, or whither it tends, or by which the matter passes, which produces thought, where there was none before, because that is extrinsic to the subject, which then does alter itself and thinks.

Again, were thought from motion of matter, it must spring from the motion of one or more atoms; if from one, whence comes it to pass, that one has more than another? If of more particles, then every atom or particle has its share of thought; and so thought becomes divisible, and mensurable according to their numbers, which is extremely absurd. In general, indeed, it may be affirmed, of all qualities and modes of matter, that they retain an essential property of being mensurable and divisible. For motion has its degrees and measures, and figure may be divided and measured; but so cannot thought; for no one can say, without impropriety, half or three-quarters of a thought.

Moreover, did thought result from motion of matter, it would be a thinking, intelligent principle, which is equally vain to suppose. Nay, motion of matter would be knowledge itself; which were as extravagant. In a word, the effect cannot be nobler than the cause by which it subsists. Now, plain it is, that thought is incomparably more noble than the motion of matter.

Besides, one may know, by induction of effects, that they hold some proportion with the cause; whereas, we find no sort of proportion between motion and thought. Add to this, that the motion of the atoms of matter are limited, and can extend but to such a term. Nor can the particles of our bodies, so abiding, ascend and mount the skies, and range the universe, penetrate the centre of the abyss;—matter and motion acting only upon things present—while thought is able to perform all this in a moment—nothing limits, nothing bounds it.

Thought, then, can by no means be the result of motion of matter; nor consequently the soul, of which thought is only a faculty, and no material thing. Moreover, motion cannot represent all things and beings to our contemplations as the soul can do. Finally, if the simple motion and matter produce no thought, it is wholly inconceivable how the existence of matter in such a place, or near another body, should produce this effect. Now, so it is, that motion only assigns place for matter, nearer or farther from the other body; thought, therefore, rises not from motion of matter.

If, then, these two principles subsist, that matter acts by motion only, and thought results not from it, it must follow, that thought has some other principle; and, consequently, that there are intellectual beings, spiritual and immaterial, namely, God, and the spirits, and the souls He has created.

Moreover, it is proved, that it is not in the power of matter to cause the least obstruction by the mutual jostling of atoms against atom, since it hits no degree,

or so much as part of any being, body, or substance, but the entire atom; and only that individual one it strikes against. But thus it is not of the soul or thinking principle, which separates only by metaphysical degrees, and is able to contemplate a thing, as a being abstractedly, stripped of all substance or body. Nay, and to represent it as a body, without so much as conceiving it an atom; we having notions of things that have no mathematical dimensions or affections of bodies, such as thought, virtue, vice, &c., in which there is nothing at all of mathematical extension or magnitudes. It is internal energy, not any local motion, capable to act and penetrate any extended substance, and to coexist with it.

It is in the capacity of the soul that we see and comprehend almost infinite things; the dimensions of bodies, the beauty of colours, the difference of taste, odour of perfumes, harmony of music, pain and pleasure, without the substance or presence of the objects, by these mere ideas. Then our memories furnish maxims, principles, conclusions, and all sensible and intellectual beings, though never so remote and absent. Now, what corporeal substance, plunged in matter, could present us with such subtile instruments, for the forming a work so incomparable, but that Supreme Being, who has endowed the soul with those perfections, even that cause more noble than the effect?

Add again to all this, those acts of reflection abstracted from matter, and of which it is totally incapable, namely, the ideas of God in all their perfections, and

other notions not obnoxious to sense. And, then, the infinite and insatiable thirst of our souls after knowledge and the love of good; its restless passion after something more perfect than what she can find here in any condition whatsoever, &c., of which more hereafter, when we shall have occasion to speak of its immortality, and to prosecute this *material-immaterial* subject, as we have done here its existence; and as the *form* of man, differing him from other animals, and exalting him above them; all of them asserting the being of a Deity, which was to be proved in this chapter.

But the union of the soul with the body is now another argument of this Divine power, namely, the so reciprocal connexion betwixt an intellectual substance and organized matter: substances and essences, though totally unlike and independent; and yet that to be so apprehensive of pain, upon the least division or violence on matter. For, how should local motion beget a thought, seeing motion only produces motion? for, should it pretend to more, the effect would exceed the cause. This union is, therefore, from no law or necessity of nature, but from some supernatural establishment of a Divine Author.

To this might be superadded the unaccountable effects of miracles, inspirations, oracles, apparitions, magical feats, and the extraordinary operations of sorcerers, so universally attested, not only by the Jews, but by Christians, and innumerable witnesses. Finally, by the more metaphysical and abstracted arguments, the reflections of a serious man, enquiring how himself came

into being, since he made not himself, (no effect being possible without a cause), nor can continue or preserve himself a moment, or foretel the future. Wherefore, these things, and the like, must of necessity flow from some Superior Cause and more excellent Being than himself; and, if so, then is there a being besides him, of infinite power; and if, from any limited or subordinate being, that being derived its existence from a being self-essential, which is the thing in question. Believe we but once, that the wisdom, understanding, and other noble and rational faculties of man were the result of matter only, and we may conclude the same of the wisdom and power of God himself, notwithstanding all those mighty works of wonder we have enumerated in the Creation; since, in respect to us at least, intellect, wisdom, reason, &c., is more noble than the mere naked character and marks of them are, for his operations are no other. If it be replied, How vast a difference there is between those faculties in man and those in God! 'Tis true. But who knows not that, besides the understanding, wisdom, &c., which we find to be formally in the soul, we also there meet with the same characters of the Creator's wisdom conspicuous in the Universe; and that the subordinateness of the parts of Nature is not more astonishing than the subordinateness of thought and affections in the soul? Did the least understanding spring from the motion of matter, so may the greatest, seeing the motion of matter seems to have no more relation with the least than with the greatest and most perfect understanding. One of the most convincing

arguments, therefore, proving the existence of a Deity, is, that matter we see immoveable, as to any power or virtue of beginning its own motion, and that it has neither degree nor determination of motion. Wherefore, we conclude, upon solid and irrefragable grounds, that something superior and extrinsical to matter gives, regulates, and directs its motion, and has determined it into this admirable fabric of the aspectable universe. So, as it were plainly madness, so much as but to imagine that matter should *think* of itself, or have anything to do in the composition of the human soul; or that, in case it had, it should not have motion and determination of that motion; motion being but a *mode* of matter, and so consequently thought; and, as was said, the same matter to produce understanding and those other Divine faculties, which, how visionary and absurd, has abundantly been evinced. And thus we have likewise proved that life and sense could never be the result of stark and senseless matter, much less cogitation, reflection, and the power of comprehending eternal verities, &c., from magnitude, figure, size, motion, or any other mixtures and combinations of elements and qualities.

We have likewise made out that the human soul is a substance specifically distinct from body, of parts inseparable, subtile, and capable of penetrating bodies; that she is self-active, having an internal energy, distinct from local motion; but whether totally unextended, otherwise than as a body, may be doubtful philosophy, and is no point of faith, but reason. For, were not the soul in every part, part of it must, which cannot be

predicated of a substance that has no parts, and were to divide an indivisible thing.

Lastly, as to *atoms*, as they are the workmanship of Almighty God, they give indeed a more probable reason of a world of considerable effects of Nature, above all other principles. But that atoms, with all their renowned advantages, or happy concourses, should of themselves produce a thought, life, or reason, is madness to affirm; so immensely disproportionate are the operations of the soul to that of matter.[1] Mankind, by virtue of a far superior and more sagacious principle than matter, can pretend to great things; and is eternally thinking, contriving, recollecting, comparing, changing, resolving, providing, and the like, in a rational series, which inconstant matter, however supplied, never can do. Did matter contend with matter, what confusion would it produce? whilst the mind and soul of man sedate the hostility, and bring it to due obedience, as being a power abstracted, a distinct and immaterial principle. Hence it is able to comprehend abstracted notions, the mathematical point, infinitesimal divisibility, and other geometrical affections, stripped both of body and sense. Her knowledge is progressive, producing consequences from premises, and things precedent, even to demon-

[1] All the mechanic motions, percolations, subliming, and elaboration of the efflorescent *hyle*, or matter, be it never so subtile and quintessential, is still (we say) but matter, and to matter must return, and to drowsy senselessness: for how sensation and perception (nay, reason, reflection, yea, and immortality itself,) should result from the posture, figure, and motion of mere magnitude, is incomprehensible.

stration. Add to this, the soul's notions of moral virtue, metaphysical theology, stable and eternal truths, wholly strange to matter, as are all the immediate emergent motions of our mind, thought, and reason; which, having no progression from matter, are things that are produced, and can subsist without it, and which we better comprehend than we do our very bodies, of which the rational soul has little cognizance.

The soul knows not how nature and matter works, either in the framing or nutrition of the body, and therefore pretends not to intermeddle with it. But, when, through any exorbitancy, or violent inclination from some sensual object, it is disordered, the soul then exerts her power, and can curb, deny, consent, determine, as she pleases, which shows her to be distinct from matter, and also her despotic sovereignty and empire over it, and that she owns no superior but God alone. For that which corrects and controls sense must be above it; and though sense never be deceived as to its own affections and faculties within itself, (provided it be not vitiated) yet can it not judge or reason of the external object, which may be vastly disproportionate to the organ; we should not, therefore, wholly consult our *senses* when we speculate truth, but call our reason to assist us, who, in conjunction, never err.

In the mean time, the soul, as seated more conspicuously in the brain, does, by the originated Neurology, give intercourse to the animal spirits, and by the muscles produce corporeal motion, as they alternately communicate their passions to the soul, where they are imme-

diately sensated. How yet the soul, thus incorporeal, is united to the body, is the mystery? We find that she takes cognizance of all considerable impressions, and that by a wonderful providence, lest the body, dull and inactive of itself, should fail of necessaries to sustain it. But what this *nexus* is, this intermediate, through which her virtue is derived into the body, must, for aught we know, remain a secret as long as soul and body dwell together here, nor is it less a paradox how they should come to know each other better when asunder than when together, and so near.

In a word, this soul of ours is a perennial source of perpetual motion to something yet to come, and more than all this world contains, furnished as is described. Since, though he had all the wealth, youth, strength, beauty, learning, and perfection it can afford him, and were he never so calm, sedate, and assured, within and without, of a future well-being; yet would all be too narrow for his large and immense desires, which somewhere else have an adequate object, as all things here are provided with. It is indeed acknowledged that we cannot form a proximate idea of anything which is not body in this mortal and bodily state of ours, so twisted and entangled with our corporeal senses. But this does not prove that, therefore, there really is nothing besides body and matter; there being so many things of which we have no positive ideas, which yet forces us to acknowledge and believe that they have real beings somewhere. The Epicureans themselves confess they have no positive idea of their atoms, being so minute as

not to be capable of falling under their most accurate senses, notwithstanding they rationally conclude they are. But though we cannot positively say what that principle in our rational operation is, by way of definition, we can what it is not, namely, that it has no proportion or relation to mere matter, but something (as we have already proved) superior to it.

The operations of man differ from those of brutes, even from the more perfection of principles; albeit, even in the operations of brutes, there may perhaps be something of more perfect than body and matter only. But these men, because they had the advantage of other sects in being able to explain many most considerable effects of nature, by local motion and disposition of matter only, with more ease and probability than others of less mechanical heads, would impose upon the world, that by the same principles they could unfold all the phenomena of nature, and whatever else concerns the being and operations of the human soul. Whilst we have plainly made appear how absurd it were that sensible should spring from insensible without a powerful aid of something highly sensible and intelligent.

No, we must not pretend to explain the nature of the principles of our reasoning faculties; nor play the geometrician with our soul, as we may with lines and figures, and things obnoxious to our senses, in this umbratile state and dependence:

Invida præclusit speciem natura videndi;[1]

[1] Lucretius, lib. i., 321.

but have recourse to a higher idea of ourselves than to make our souls (that precious substance by which we are distinguished from the beasts that perish) of that base alloy. Let us resolve it to be infinitely more noble and perfect; and that, though we cannot exactly tell what we are, we certainly know we are far from that they would persuade us we be—mire and dust, inactive and unthinking stuff, such as they will wish themselves.

SECTION III.—PART II.

BY THE NOVITY OF THE WORLD.

The novity of the world,[1] and that it had a beginning, is another proof of a Deity, and his being author and maker of it. Nor does it, by any authentic records, appear to have begun much sooner than Moses has set it down. Aristotle, indeed, seems to fancy the world co-eternal with its cause, as light is from the sun—by a necessary, not voluntary production. And Plato's argument was, that, it being the most perfect, first, and best of His works, He would never destroy it. But, had it been eternal, it must then have been the first, and so, of necessity, God himself; and, doubtless, in all this tract of time, been more and sooner peopled. Whereas, we find it many ages and periods ere the western and northern parts were at all inhabited, or brought to any culture. Nor is it possible that busy

[1] See Macrobius Somn. Scip., lib. ii., cap. x.

mankind should have lived so very long without better houses and conveniences of life; or passed so many thousand thousand years without books, buildings, navigation, and other useful arts; the fathers and inventors of all which, with their progress, perfection, and decay, are transmitted to us.[1]

Seneca tells us, that, even in his time, there were almost none of the sciences which could derive their pedigree above one thousand years; nor any history or chronology beyond a certain epoch. We know of none more ancient than Moses or Job,[2] (whom some conceive the elder), nor any heathen writer before Homer, Hesiod, Herodotus, and some other Greek poets. And Lucretius ingenuously confesses, that before the Trojan war there was nothing worth knowledge delivered by any author worthy credit; which, with the like arguments of the late invention of arts and forms of government, he makes use of to assert the novity of the world.

For, as to laws and legislators, they began in the paternal, and continued to families; and as they increased into tribes and clans, to colonies and migrations; as people and kindred combined into societies for mutual

[1] After all the wonderful things pretended to have been invented by the Chinese so many thousand years beyond our chronologies, those who have made the latest and best discoveries of those people, and most accurately examined things upon the place, can really find nothing exceeding the universal flood.

[2] Some have affirmed Job to have been one of Esau's sons, and the friends who came to condole, petty kings.

defence and assistance. And then men lived meanly, in huts, and ambulatory tents; the father of a family being both the prince and priest, that function being still preserved in the primogeniture, as long, at least, as they lived before the promulgation of the Mosaic law; and till they erected tyrannies and kingdoms, and built cities and fortresses, as they grew opulent and haughty; when they also raised enormous structures, pyramids, and temples; and vice and rapine breaking them in divisions, made them choose captains and guardians to conduct them; and judges to do right, when better settled; and, since that could not be amongst them without force and power, they came in time to submit to kings and princes, at first, perhaps, of choice and by compact, or right of conquest, which grew to empire and arbitrary dominion. Thus, from private families, and inter-community of goods, as they separated and dwelt at distances, they used exchange and permutation; thence to money, weights, and measures, merchandize, and traffic; from iron to brass, gold and silver, or whatever was most precious and apt for their commerce and ease.

As to sciences, the Greeks knew nothing of philosophy before Pythagoras; Socrates was the first who gave them any relish of it. Thales first taught them *astronomy*, who learned from the Egyptians—they from the Chaldeans; but it never arrived to the perfection it now is at. As for *medicine*, Hippocrates gave them rules, and began to methodize what before was comprehended in a few scattered receipts among empirics

and silly women. *Laws*, from the code of Justitian, to that of Theodosius; his from the twelve famous tables, compiled from those of Greece; theirs from Solon and Lycurgus, and his from Egypt. Truly, the world was thought to be so young a creature, that Macrobius did not compute its age to be above two thousand years before his time, and that very rationally, from the paucity of books and good histories, which should have informed us; so as, from the creation to the incarnation, all our Christian chronologies, even at the widest distance, agree within forty years of one another.

Touching *cataclysms* and universal inundations, they could not possibly arise by any natural means; and if through supernatural, it proves what is contended for. And, besides, that of Noah's only excepted, such as we read of to have happened since, were but partial, affecting but some particular countries. Add hereto, that the Assyrian, Chaldean, and Egyptian computation of their annals brings no manner of solid proof of the world's having been extant so many years, whatever fancy and ambition of antiquity have created; making their kings to have reigned above twelve hundred years a piece. The Assyrians, theirs forty thousand; all which, as brags and boastings, are worthily refuted by St. Augustine.[1] The Persian empire, in Alexander's time, not being fully three hundred years old. But these exorbitant computations were spread abroad for the honour of those great nations, which we named; unless, which is more probable, they reckoned months

[1] De Civ. Dei, lib. ix., c. 10.

for solar years, as divers have conjectured. But, as we said, these misreckonings have been sufficiently refuted by St. Augustine; and by one who was not in the least obliged to Moses, the Epicurean poet,[1] from the known original of cities, arts, nations, colonies, victories, books, and records, as we have already showed; and by considering how vast a tract of earth and sea was both unknown and uninhabited. I know there are who tell us of earthquakes and conflagrations, as well as floods, which have sometimes confounded all, or reduced the world to ashes, and that it has as often (Phœnix-like) emerged, and been successively repaired; but these are precarious dreams.

Indeed, the school-men hold the world, though created at a certain time, yet that it had such parts, as might have been antecedent to the time in which it really was created, and have been eternal too, had God so pleased. But neither will this hold, since something must still have been before it. Besides the world being composed of mixed bodies, particles of matter, and concretions, full of contrary qualities, could not last for ever, all mixture being obnoxious to corruption. And if the world consisted of simple bodies only, it would not be of use, adapted with all its necessary furniture, as now it is. For we see what diversity of materials is required to the composing of most natural mixed bodies and individuals, which both commenced in time, and require it for their perfection. Successive things must have some beginning; and divers principal things,

[1] Lucretius.

useful and absolutely necessary, are successive — as vegetables, animals, and whatever is maintained by propagation; all kinds of motions, augmentations, and diminutions; since, if that motion had beginning, it had existence and a place, or *ubi*, before it moved; and, if motion be not eternal, neither can the world be so. So as the necessary supposition of successive alterations unavoidably subverts the world's eternity; because it is composed of such individuals as derive their originals from the nature of their *species*. For so a tree rises from its proper seed or tender plant before it can arrive to full stature and perfection, and the like will happen in every other thing essentially alterable.

Lastly, as to the invention of letters and other arts, which should deliver to us times past. Though Plato made a god of Hermes, to whom he attributes them, yet we never heard of any more ancient than the Hebrews or Phœnicians, Palamede's alphabet, and some Egyptian hieroglyphics. As for the inscription on Seth's pillar,[1] (if no suspected antiquity) it proves nothing to the eternity of the world, no more than the calculations of the Chinese annals, Egyptians, and other nations. It is confessed, both by Diodorus Siculus, Plutarch, &c., that they counted all by lunar years, as

[1] [The posterity of Seth (says Josephus, l. i., c. ii.) having heard that Adam had foretold that the world should some time be destroyed by water, and at another time by fire, resolved to preserve the discoveries they had made in astronomy, and in the knowledge of heavenly things: they, therefore, erected two columns, one of stone, the other of brick; and it is said that the column of stone is still in being in *Seirath*, or *Syrias*.—*Calmet's Dict.*]

we have already noted. Nor was the institution of the Sabbath in memory of the creation, even before the Jewish Sabbath was enjoined, a contemptible argument; nor the division of time by weeks, so universally received. In a word, had the world been from eternity, the very course of rivers, and descent of rains from the more eminent parts, had ere this levelled the profoundest valleys, and made the earthly globe but one vast campaign, by carrying down the looser earth, gravel, and other mould, sufficient to have filled up the deepest abysses and gulphs of the ocean itself.

In the mean time, it was a nice (or indeed rather an idle) question, What God did before He made the world? St. Augustine answers the impertinent, that he did "curiosis fabricare infernum.[1]" Doubtless God was a world to Himself, when no world was. Never was he alone or idle. The contemplation of His own glory and perfections is sufficient to entertain Him to eternity, without other society, for He is all. And when he thought fit to create this aspectable piece of work, it was of His own good pleasure, and to diffuse and spread His glory, power, and beneficence, not to receive any the least accession from His creatures, but communicate it.

It was likewise another question, but more modest, from some expression pretended of St. Augustine: Whether God created all *in eodem nunc et momento*,[2] or made it six days' work, mentioned so in Scripture, only

[1] "Create hell for impertinent inquirers."

[2] "In the same *now* and moment."

to comply with our weak capacities, who do nothing but in time and successively. To this it is replied, that, according to the literal text, He did it not at once; not that He could not so have done it by a thought alone:[1] nor that, indeed, He used these words to the dull chaos: but to teach us to deliberate in all our actions, and contemplate what this glorious God has made. Besides, we read that, dividing the supernal waters from those beneath, on the second day, He gave no benediction or approbation, till they were collected into one place after this separation; as if till that were done, the work were yet imperfect, which was not till the third day. Lastly, His reposing on the seventh supposes His desisting from adding any further to His works, or multiplying new species.

Thus have we showed how the creation of the world had its original in time, and in this research, as of man by retrospect from ancestor to ancestor, till we come to the first. For, though it be essential to the existence of a Deity thus powerful, that He be eternal, it is not so of the visible and material world, or aught within it. Creation, as well as generation, being actions, have a natural relation to certain principles producing them. And (as we have said) if we descend from the branches to the trunk and stem, it will infallibly lead us to the root: and if there be no branch but what has an end and top-twig, it were infinitely absurd to think there were infinite stems and roots to that twig.

[1] So Epicharmus and Plato, verbo Dei facta omnia;—"Every thing was made by the word of God."

SECTION IV.

BY PROVIDENCE AND GOVERNMENT OF THE WORLD.

We come, in the last place, to prove there is a God, by the government and preservation of what He has created. Providence is, indeed, but a continual creation, discovering to us His infinite power, omniscience, goodness, and wisdom, no less in maintaining what He has made, than in His making them destined to their various ends. For, although the Almighty desisted from creating any new species on the seventh day, yet it is not meant that He left off from sustaining and preserving what He made. The Epicureans would indeed have their god to be lazy as themselves, but such is not our God, who is a perpetual Act, always doing good, filling our hearts with food and gladness.

But, not to insist here on what Scripture alone discovers of the ways of God, by which He wonderfully blessed and preserved His peculiar people, and divers particular persons in all ages: His judgments on the wicked, destroying kings and mighty empires by His stretched out arm, by signs and wonders; but by the suffrages even of every heathen is showed the just veneration they paid to that incomprehensible Being, upon the contemplation of such things and events as declared His providence, and that the world could not subsist without it. That illustrious passage of Seneca serves for all:[1] "*Manent cuncta, non quia æterna fiunt, sed*

[1] Seneca, Ep. 58.

quia defenduntur curâ Regentis.[1]" Things so repugnant, amidst that infinite variety, never could have conspired together, to uphold the wondrous frame of the universe in that admirable order and economy we see it, had not He who contrived it guided every wheel, every action, motion, and property about it. It were, therefore, far less absurd for man to believe himself not to be, than to believe that he or anything in nature sprang from no cause at all; and he, who peremptorily denies that there is any Providence, does worse than he who believes there is no God. So as Aristotle being asked what answer we should give to one who questioned Providence, replied, "*A scourge;*" intimating that such ungrateful wretches deserved rather to be treated like slaves than men of honour, so generally were the very heathen for this paternal care of God.[2]

But, because God does not immediately punish evil-doers, and vengeance is not suddenly executed, therefore is the heart of man set upon mischief and unbelief. The lightning and thunderbolt, 'tis true, do sometimes strike, sometimes pass by without their dreadful effects, to show to mortal man His justice, clemency, and power. Insects and noxious vermin also devour the fruits of the earth and hopeful harvests. And is not all this ordered by a wonderful Providence? Should God be severe to mark what we continually do amiss, there would be nothing left, since we daily provoke

[1] "All things continue, not because they are made eternal, but because they are upheld by the care and defence of a Ruler."

[2] See Grotius De V. Rel. Chris., lib. i.

Him by our ingratitude. But for these His chastisements, we should utterly forget the benefits He confers upon us. The very heathen, therefore, acknowledged this His lenity and long suffering; and that, if their Jupiter should send out his artillery for every offence,

Exiguo tempore inermis erit,

he would soon be disarmed. And we know what Plutarch has concluded, *upon the late strokes of the Deity*;[1] and that, though the feet of God be slow, and soft as wool, His revenging hands are as heavy as lead. Besides, neither is it for nothing that God has ordained some creatures and things, which we think (but which are not) superfluous. Even insects eat up and cleanse the earth of much corruption; and they are medical, and feed many creatures which nourish us; whilst, at other times, they are sent as plagues for our luxury and intemperance, and to show the despisers of His Almighty power what great things He can effect by the most despicable means. And, as to the rest of God's proceedings in this sort, as we shall never here comprehend the cause of all things, so neither shall we know the cause of these; nor why God sends rain and storms, good and evil, promiscuously; washing as well the barren rock and wilderness with His benign showers, as the fruitfullest garden; though we may not, therefore, conclude He does it from no cause, or by chance, because we cannot comprehend the reason.

[2] De Ser. Vind. Dei.

For, though the pregnant clouds dissolve in the most seemingly unnecessary places, they may be the cause and originals of those rivers, streams, and fountains, which flow from those eminences to refresh the valleys, and give drink and other conveniences both to man and beast. In a word, there is not the silliest fly, or worm that crawls, nor any grain of seed which falls, and becomes lost and scattered upon the ground, but is for the food or help of some creature, at some time or other necessary for us; so as there is nothing made for nothing (though made out of nothing) but such ungrateful creatures, who blaspheme upon these accounts, and from their shallow reasonings.

The most abject, vile, and trivial things in nature are admirable, and those creatures which we reckon most defective, the most curious, and completely accommodated to their several functions. Indeed, some are noxious poisons, yet become antidotes; one fierce animal devours another, lest the wild beasts should increase upon us. Yet have we the benefit of their flesh for food, or fat, or other parts, for ointments, or skins for clothing, and other uses, of the most truculent bears, wolves, and other brutes. Then we find, that those animals which are weakest and less able to defend themselves, and preserve their useful species, are either most swift of foot or wing, or willingly reduce themselves under the care of men; as sheep and other cattle, poultry, bees, &c. And they are spread over all the earth, as well as air and water, without which none can live. How many fruits are there encrusted with thorns,

shells, and other hard integuments, to defend their kernels and nutritious parts from being devoured before they ripen and are fit for use!

And if in nothing here we find all perfection, it only shows that the creature is not God, but He who only is. For the beauty of the world consists not in its separated parts, (which seem imperfect) but united, its order, economy, and concurrence to the end; which shows it to be the work of a wise and voluntary Agent, the nature whereof relates to final causes. Now, if in the universe there be a final cause and last resort, there must needs likewise be a prime efficient cause, which is God, who cannot be imagined to forget his own production, without whose assiduous care the thing designed would be to no end or purpose. He, therefore, doubtless, governs, maintains, and directs what He has made, to the end for which He made it. If, then, He take such care of the least of His creatures, and most insensible, shall we think He takes none of man, for whom He created them; who of all His creatures most resembles Him, and is endowed with faculties to acknowledge his bounty and beneficence?

And now we mention Man. Is anything more stupendous than the providential subserviency and use of all his bodily functions (whether voluntary or involuntary), for the mutual preservation of the whole? The distribution of chyle and aliments, formation and course of the blood, generation of spirits, nutrition and growth of the whole, his natural faculties, and all these acting, whether we sleep or wake, and whether we think at all

of them or no! Upon this, therefore, let us enlarge a little, and consider the hand again.

As man has but one natural and tender covering, and is born with so little defence, he has an instrument to furnish him with all manner of weapons, and is alone a magazine; and that, whilst other animals have, for the most part, but one sort of food and medicine, man has variety and abundant choice of all things. This is what the orator[1] has, from the light of nature only, termed a Divine and God-like work. For albeit there be the same number and contexture of parts, and that the most of these actions and circumstances are common to brutes, yet, when all is done, 'tis plain the use of them is not accommodated to so multifarious and divers purposes, nor conducted with that thought and cogitancy, but may be reduced to some very few ones in comparison.[2] Nor deny we that, as to the structure of the body, and geometry (so to speak) of animals, there is anything in the lever, wedge, pulley, axis, screw, spring, counterpoise, or like mechanism, whose artificial powers and figure are not established on the same principle with the natural motion of animals, as, among others, the famous Descartes and the late Borellus[3] have, with surprising acuteness, made out; but, to make the powers of the

[1] Cic. De Nat. Deor., l. ii.

[2] De Placit. Hippoc., Plato, l. v., c. 10. Aristot. Mech., c. 31. Lactant. De Opif. Dei, c. 6. The Epicureans did not allow that any organ, or member, was designed to any proper use at all, from any providential cause, but *ex usu vitæ* merely, and habitude.

[3] Borell. De Mos. Anal. 9.

rational soul, in which man is chiefly concerned and distinguished, as merely proceeding from the contrivement of certain apartments in the brain,[1] is altogether wild.

In the mean time, we admire the inventions and machinations of engineers, new and old,[2] (Myrmecides' ship, Callicrates' Pismire, &c.), and acknowledged they were authors of many wonderful and curious contrivances by their art and sagacity, whilst this stupendous masterpiece of their Creator, and who endowed them with that ingenuity superior to the rest of the animals, and so widely different to all operations and possible perfections desirable to render them sensible of their extraction, must either (with them) be the result of chance, or the base contrivement and modification of the parts of matter, and a little warmth to give it motion, without other form or principle considerable!

And whilst, with all this, we have convincingly shewed how these great wits (as they would be esteemed) do not clearly make out how spontaneous motion can anyways correspond with a pure mechanical hypothesis, it is evidently beyond the activity of the most ingeniously framed parts, or even animal spirits themselves, (as the elegant Burlæus[3] observes) however pretended,

[1] Like the combination of atoms and elements to the consequences of Democritus' Hypothesis, or those who follow him. *Talia quidem sunt,* nor deny we the effect. *Sed non tamen sunt alicujus gratia,* which we utterly reject.

[2] Dædalus, Archytas. Cstesibes Hiero.

[3] "Cum nec membra hæc, nec spiritus internuntii, aut mandata capiunt, aut mandantem nôrint."—*Burl. De Anim. Hum.*

to descend thus into them from the brain. When the musician runs division with his nimble fingers on the harp or other instrument, they so answer every motion of his fancy, as that neither of them outruns or prevents the other, although (as our learned Ent[1] illustrates it), at the same instant he plays, he sings, he dances, and moves at least three hundred muscles, and all this done with that prodigious swiftness as seems to prevent the very thought! Shall we imagine (says the Doctor) all this performed by a crowd of spirits steaming from the brain, and confusedly rushing through the divaricated sextipar nerves into those exiguous passages (according to the Atomists) without a guiding power, or some dexterous and nimble Mercury, to conduct them by the various ways they are to take? But to return to the hands again.

Anaxagoras was used to say, Man was of all creatures the most prudent, because (as we celebrate that organ) he was fitted with hands; but Galen, with much more reason, that therefore he had hands, because it was intended he should be wise and prudent; so as that learned physician is compelled to acknowledge a sublimer cause, as may be seen with great delight in those seventeen admirable treatises,[2] which are, in a manner, but one

[1] Antidiatrib., p. 130. [Dr. Ent, afterwards knighted by Charles II., was President of the College of Physicians, London, and one of the first members of the Royal Society. He is named by the author (chap. iii., sec. 2), as one of the first men of his time.]

[2] Galen, "De Usu Partium;" more especially lib. iii.. c. 14, in

perpetual hymn to God. In good earnest, the passages are of such a strain, that one should transcribe them all, or say nothing at all, for there is nothing to be left out, whether we consider the dignity of the matter or sublimity of the style. Nor with less, the orator, who is plainly transported with admiration at the fabric of man's body, and particularly of his hands, eyes, &c.; and, breaking into the most pious reflections, ascribes all to the Providence of God.

If the subtle Cardan[1] so much admire a Providence at the structure and working of a mole, as, upon the contemplation of his feet and snout only, (how expeditely he mines into the earth, breaks and removes the stubborn clods, and makes a little earthquake in its working) to confess that despicable animal could not be created by chance, but by some wise design; what may we not conclude of so many other, and especially of *man*, whose parts and operations are so much more worthy of admiration!

It is in this golden discourse of the *Nature of Gods*[2] that the same Cicero, in the person of his stoical dia-

which he extols the Omnipotent Architect, His power, wisdom, providence, beyond all the mysteries and sciences of the heathen world.

[1] [Born at Pavia, A.D. 1501, professor of mathematics and medicine. He was employed to calculate the nativity of King Edward VI.; owns himself a dealer in the black art, and believed that he was attended by a Daimon from the planet Saturn.—*Biographie Universelle.*]

[2] Ex quibus intelligitur, quantæ res hominibus a Deo, quamque eximæ, tributæ sunt.—*Cic. de Fin.*, l. 3.

logists, proceeds to describe the admirable economy of universal Nature, or rather of God himself, (for it is in assertion of a Divine and Providential Being that he argues all along in that incomparable force of reason and stream of eloquence) in framing brute animals, as well as man, after so wonderful a manner. It is then he describes the crafty addresses of the little spider, how some are weaving nets, and toils for the prey, others watching to surprise it. He speaks of the society of fishes, for mutual assistance and provision; of the martial discipline of fowls; descends to beasts, and their great sagacity for defence and covert; how naturally they seek the teat; how educated by their sires; form such artificial nests; and that such as are not able to defend themselves crave the aid of man, and the protection of his reason, as dignifying him above themselves.

Thence passes to the fabric of his body, and, entering into all the parts of anatomy, describes the head, and more eminent seat of the senses. Takes notice how Nature, like a skilful architectress, placed the organ of smelling at a remoter distance from the more noisome and offensive sinks and emunctories: describes the eye, and several tunicles and muscles; the meandering ear, and how the voice is undulated. In sum, after an accurate inspection and comparison, he still reserves the pre-eminence to man. This he proves by innumerable instances worthy the recital: men's eyes, says he, judge better of colours, beauty, figure, and curiosities of art: his ears distinguish the varieties of sounds and

voice more accurately: the palate, variety of tastes, and so of the rest. But when he comes to reason, *quâ nec in Deo quidem est res ulla præstantior*, what streams of eloquence does he not pour forth! To this succeeds the instrument of speech, which he calls *domina rerum*, the queen, and mistress of all the rest; and, attributing a kind of divinity to it, strews such flowers on it, as none but that prince of orators is able to describe it. "By this," says he, "we learn, by the same we teach. By her we exhort, by her we persuade, by her we comfort the afflicted, encourage the timorous, moderate the transported, bridle the furious, restrain the covetous; it is she who has bound mankind in civil society, and, in a word, made him differ from brutes, &c."[1]

But then he takes him by the hand again, and enumerates its ability for all manner of operations in ten thousand inventions. By these, says he, we prepare and vary our food, make our garments, tame wild and furious creatures, and compel those who offend us to fight and conquer for us; and after all these truculent monsters, which with our hands we cicurate, by our hands also we subdue the most terrible of all the elements, the wind and the sea, and domineer over the whole earth; so as our hands become a second nature, even in Nature herself.

[1] Hâc cohortamur, hâc persuademus, hâc consolamur afflictos, hâc deducimus perterritos a timore, hâc gestientes comprimimus, hâc cupiditates iracundiasque restinguimus; hæc nos juris, legum, verborum societate devinxit, hæc à vitâ inani et ferâ segregavit, &c.—De Orat., l. iii.

Finally, (speaking of his intellectual abilities) he penetrates the sublimest Heavens, and from things supreme arrives to the knowledge of a Deity; and to a sense of religion, piety, justice, and the whole circle of virtues, which render him *par et similis Deorum*, and in nothing inferior but that he is mortal. These are the transcendents and pre-eminences which this admirable heathen attributes to mankind; and what could a Christian more, considering with how particular a care and providence God has invigilated over him above all other creatures?

Turn we our eyes from man a little on other sensitive substances, innumerable as they are, moving in the air, swimming in the water, dwelling in the earth; their diversity, propriety, figures, beauty, habiliments, arms, instincts, actions, ends. How many vast volumes should one be obliged to write to describe them! How much vaster understanding to comprehend them! *Tantis operibus Deus notitiam suam armavit*, says Tertullian. And, indeed, were not the world sustained and governed by an Infinite Providence, like to a crazy vessel, weather-beaten, and grounded without a pilot, it had long ere this been shipwrecked, and fallen to pieces. Volcanoes, inundations, conflagrations, plagues, and epidemical sicknesses; factions of unruly people, rebellions, differences of religions, and violent commotions of ungovernable men, and tyrannies; no element in Nature, but, at one time or other, domineering, and threatening to swallow and reduce all into principles, did not some Almighty Power compose these disorders, reduce the proud and

swelling waves, and say, Hitherto shall ye go, and no farther.

Nor is this great God molested or distracted with this multiplicity of things under His care, as some Heathens fancied. I say not all; for Socrates convinced Aristodemus[1] the contrary, by the soul's governing the body, without the least confusion; whilst others fancied as many several deities and powers as there were employments; and accordingly assigned them their particular provinces, measuring them by the possibilities of men. Neither must we imagine the Almighty does anything in time, and by succession, (as we finite creatures do) but He sees, thinks, acts, disposes all things, *semel et simul*, even to the determining the nature of every cause, the leaf of every tree, every hair of our heads, every sparrow that falls and lights upon the ground; and knows all that does not actually exist, even the ultimities of what can or may be; nay, future contingencies and events, which He does not necessitate, to the end we may entirely depend on Him alone.[2] But thus some wretched sophists and shallow fops took umbrage that so many and different notices and things should be assigned to any one God, as fancying him a man, no more capable than themselves

[1] Xenophon. Mem. l. i.

[2] If God did not comprehend and take in particulars, as well as universals, how could He comprehend Himself, since all generals subsist in particulars? And should these latter fail, (as they would, did not God preserve them) the former must come to ruin also.

of what we attribute to him: and as if He, who made all, understood not what He made, even all the springs of motion whatsoever, and possible resorts.

We see the sun at the same moment, without the least fatigue or confusion, employed about innumerable services, for all the creatures, animal or vegetable, and all things under heaven; all distinctions of seasons, productions of plants, maturity of fruits, concoction of minerals; meteorizing of vapours, cherishing animals, enlightening the world, and other numberless uses, which we take no notice of. But, especially, how the soul of man (as we have instanced) is able at the same moment of time to contemplate the remoted heavens and its various revolutions; directs the body and its several affections, and comprehends such wonderful and distant notions, arts and sciences, and things metaphysical and abstracted, without the least trouble or distraction. Now, if a creature soul is able to perform all this, how much more able is the Great Soul of the World (Creator of Souls) to govern, manage, and dispose of all things, and who has, for infinite occasions, infinite wisdom, power, faculties, and accomplishments!

I know there be who have with bold blasphemy imagined that, had they been of counsel with the Great God, when He created the world, they could have contrived it better. There should, say they, have been no wildernesses, nor barren rocks; no noxious beasts, no birds of prey, no dissensions among people, no death nor misery in the world. Epicurus and his scholars of

old,[1] and some daring persons of later times, make this an argument of there being no God, such faults they have discovered in the workmanship, as if all were made by chance. But we have already shewed the pride and vanity of these impudent and ungrateful wretches, and with what incomparable wisdom God has made all things as they are. So as with the pious stoic:[2] "He who would," says he, "undertake to mend what is done, and contrive things to more advantage, should in the first place try to mend God, and teach him better; but if he find that too hard for him, mend himself, and no more entertain so wicked an imagination."

It is admirable what Xenophon[3] makes Socrates to enumerate of the incomparable advantages God has enriched man with above all the creatures, discoursing of His care and providence to Enthydemus, and how much we are obliged to be thankful: that though the rest of animals are many of them stronger than man, yet they are his vassals. In a word, the whole dialogue seems a paraphrase on the eighth Psalm, and is so full of what Cicero has written, (and we have already cited) that it was certainly transcribed *verbatim* out of our author from the Greek.

There are those who complain that they had not eyes in their neck behind, as well as in their faces before, and pretend to refine on the works of nature, and that God has not given them the legs and strength of horses,

[1] Lucretius. [2] Epictetus.
[3] Xen. Mem., lib. 4.

and that man comes into the world so feeble and defenceless—

> " ut sævis projectus ab undis
> Navita nudus humi jacet," &c.[1]

> " The little infant child cast out,
> Like a poor mariner, tossed by fierce seas,
> Naked on earth the helpless baby lies,
> When Nature makes it in the light at first
> By throes out of its mother's womb to burst;
> And that with mournful cries the place it fills:
> Justly, whose life must pass so many ills.
> While divers cattle breed, herds, and wild beasts,
> Nor need they rattles, or to be caressed
> With broken words of the fond nurse, nor yet
> Need they to change their clothes for seasons fit,
> Nor arms, nor bulwarks raise, nor a high wall
> To guard them, since the earth all things for all
> Provides....."

Or, as is most elegantly described by Pliny;[2] and by Plato in his fiction of Protagoras, where he shows how mankind, coming naked into the world, was committed to the care of Epimetheus, to supply what he wanted; but that he had been so profuse in furnishing the rest of animals with all things necessary, and so improvident as to man, that there was nothing left for the poor creature, till Prometheus stole fire from Vulcan, and from Mercury the use of it, who was sent by Jupiter to assist his other wants, and to teach him arts and sciences. And we must indeed confess that there is nothing in nature more helpless and utterly destitute;

[1] Lucret., lib. v., 223.

[2] Nat. Hist., lib. ii. Præf.

but this is so far from detracting from the Providence of God, that it infinitely exalts it. The feeble infant, truly, can neither stand nor go, feed, clothe, or shift for itself, whilst we see other living creatures come vested, armed, able immediately to find their pasture, defend and maintain themselves. But see: no sooner does this child grow up, but he covers himself with their spoils, feeds on their flesh, and uses them for his vassals. They plough, sow, carry burdens for him, and do whatever he pleases. For though he have not the strength of the elephant, the swiftness of the roe, the sagacity of the dog, nor the bulk and procerity of an oak, yet he has prudence, and reason, and faculties, which not only supply what he may seem to want of the perfection of other creatures, but transcends them.[1] He conquers and subdues the strongest and fiercest of them; brings the sturdiest cattle under yoke; manages the most ungovernable horse; catches the swiftest fowl; climbs to the highest nest; takes the craftiest fox and indomitable panther in nets, gins, traps, and a thousand surprising inventions. "For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind,"[2] so as to serve both his necessity and recreation. Moreover, he digs into the entrails of the earth; dives into the bottom of the seas; shuts out and admits the heat of the scorching sun at his pleasure; prepares his food; knows the

[1] Simonides apud Plutarch, *Utrum Animal.* Theodor. Serm. 5. De Prov. Oppian, lib. v. Halieut.

[2] James, iii., 7.

use of fire for a world of purposes; and clothes and warms himself, which no other creature does beside him. He builds lofty pyramids, cities, and enormous fabrics, out of the bowels of rocks; and makes whole forests of sturdy oaks and stately pines descend from the lofty mountains to the lowest floods and far-distant ocean, where go the ships, and where is that Leviathan whom God has made to take his pastime therein.[1] But even him, with his harping spear, he boldly encounters, subdues, and brings captive to the shore. He cuts huge channels of water, joins seas to seas, raises forts impregnable. He levels mountains, and sometimes removes them with his artificial lightning. And yet nothing of all this, almost, by virtue of his natural strength, (in which he is so far inferior to brutes) but by that Reason which the providence of God has supplied him with, stronger than all created powers on earth.

How unreasonably, then, does ungrateful man cavil, as if he alone were neglected; whereas, should God have gratified his foolish wish, he would be the first to deplore his unhappy condition, and wish himself like other men. Plato, says Lactantius,[2] with better reason might have thanked the gods he was a man, and condemned those ingrates, who are not satisfied in being the noblest of creatures, unless they also had been beasts. How vain, yet impossible, that were, Firmianus handsomely demonstrates, when the philosopher gave thanks

[1] Psalm, 104, 26. Job, xli.

[2] Opif. Dei, c. 3, et de falsâ Rel., l. i., c. 8.

to the Deity that he was a man, and not a beast; born at Athens, not in an obscure village: than which, says he, nothing is more impertinent. As if, had Plato been indeed a brute, he had been Plato. How much wiser, then, had he proceeded to have reserved his thanks, that he was an ingenious, docile, and learned person, since so many dull blockheads might have been born at Athens, as well as himself, &c.

But for the rest of those malecontents. Were I a nightingale, says honest Epictetus,[1] I would do as a nightingale does; but since I am a rational creature, I will laud and celebrate my Maker. Let us learn of this Christian Heathen. I tell you, Seneca[2] is in admiration at these peevish wretches, these *iniqui divinorum munerum æstimatores*,[3] as he calls them. The whole passage were worth transcribing, but more the pondering of it by our wits and drolls, who, as the philosopher speaks, are (as now in ours so in his time) arrived to that pitch of impudence, that they hated even Nature herself, because she had not made them Gods, whereas they ought to have been thankful they were men, and dignified with the second place of all His glorious and royal palace, enriched with so ample a dominion and so many prerogatives; that all the creatures are subject to him; that he is endowed with such virtue and powers above them; that his soul lustrates and pervades through all things; his thoughts preventing the swiftest motion of the heavens; in a word, that

[1] Enchir. [2] De Benef., l. 2. c. 20.

[3] "Unfair valuers of God's gifts."

mankind enjoys such an accumulation of earthly blessings, that, when he shall have well surveyed them all—because he can find nothing so accomplished as himself, for which he would exchange his condition, and choose what he most desires—he must be driven to confess himself the very darling of Nature, and that the Gods have placed him next themselves: which is the supremest honour we are capable of, *Magna accepimus, majora non cepimus*, so brim-full, that we can contain no more: thus Seneca.

To this let us add the wonderful and wise contrivance of the aspectable world again, and its furniture; that in all this tract of time there should not appear the least crack, defect, incoherence, or decay of any of the most minute parts or accessory; so as to require need of mending, repair, or of being better excogitated for the use and purposes they first were made, but that all continue as they did from the beginning, (as the Atheist in St. Peter tells us themselves acknowledge) is of stupendous consideration, and asserts the wisdom, power, and providence of the Creator.[1]

Will not the Heathen rise in judgment against our modern Atheist? For, indeed, not only the celestial bodies and their regular courses, and more illustrious instances of the Divine Providence in the mundane system, but every tree, and plant, and flower, and fly declare His goodness, care, and vigilance, and that in wisdom He has made them all; that both Heaven and earth are full, top-full of His riches, I say; all that is

[1] II. Pet., iii., 4.

on the earth; all that is in the earth, minerals and stones; all that is above the earth, the glorious orbs, the vicissitudes of seasons, propagation of species, and exuberance, in their several elements, for their clothing, food, delight, medicine. The faculties, instincts, polity, combinations accommodating all things to the use of man, above the rest. Not that the universe was only made for us; the whole not for any part, but that part for the whole, and the whole for the Maker, though the things of this inferior world may be said to be principally made for man, while other superior creatures may not be altogether unconcerned even in this visible creation. Nothing, then, of all this could subsist without a wise supreme cause or moderator, or possibly be the result of chance or blind necessity operating on senseless matter. Nor is human nature a mere machine, nor our mind and soul the mechanical creature of motion; nor does any the least thing hang merely by the links of natural causes, but is the decree of a most admirable disposer; the structure and formation of man alone being as great a proof of the Deity and His providence as that of the whole world itself. Lastly, the preservation of empires and governments, as well under monarchs as republics; that so many different men of so many different minds, interests, and affections should submit to one, as a few for so many ages have done; as well as the translation of kingdoms and governments by such wonderful methods and means, for the punition of tyrants, and the vices of men, of which history abounds with examples. And what unexpected events

have followed: as in Alexander's conquests, Augustus's peaceful time, the success of the Turks against the disagreeing Christians, the present lowness of Spain from their inhumanity in the late revolution.

Nor can the unequal distribution of prosperity and adversity of virtuous and religious people at all prejudice God's providence to any one, who considers that our condition is totally independent; and that, when at any time Almighty God is pleased to disappoint our expectations, it is for reasons perfectly known by Him, for some necessary and prudent end, most just and equitable, though we at present comprehend it not. So as when it is said, "the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding,"[1] &c. It is not meant as if all fell out by adventure, but that God disposes otherwise than we conjecture. For He only sees the heart, and can tell what cross events and inconveniences would succeed our contrivances and imaginations, should everything be as we desire, who know not what is best for us. And thus, likewise, does God show His absolute dominion over His creatures; and would men but contemplate the exceeding great reward designed to holy and excellent persons for their short sufferings here, and ordinary disappointments, they would, instead of murmuring, doubting, and censuring, give God thanks for everything that befalls them. The most righteous man living being but an unprofitable servant, happy they, who, enduring afflictions and

[1] Eccles., ix., 11.

animadversions here, shall be accounted worthy to escape the judgment to come, when there shall be rewards distributed, and crowns of immortal glory. But, besides this, it sets the higher value on piety, virtue, and obedience. It may also be generally observed, that holy and good men have commonly the greatest temporal blessings too; and that if any thing intervene to the contrary, it is evidently from their own want of prudence and timely caution, or for their good: not here to pass by the Divine vengeance upon notoriously wicked men, even in this life also, and how uncomfortably they go out of it, in the midst of all their seeming prosperity.

The sum, then, of all we have here produced, is to prove what is most manifest, *That there is a God.* Indeed, we cannot see God, whom none shall see, and live. The most sagacious of our natural organs would be oppressed with the splendour of that vision, till they come to be refined, changed, and spiritualized; and then shall we see and contemplate Him as He is, in the face of Jesus Christ, who is the only image of His countenance, and in whom all the perfections of the Godhead are conspicuous, to the filling the largest of our capacities. But, considered as they are here, so far are we unable to behold God, save in His works and Providence, that we see not our own selves; that is, our souls, (for the soul is the man) which is yet so near, so intimate, and perpetually about us. But, though we can neither see God, nor our souls, we may and can have a real idea of both, without a sensible vision; and

our reason can represent that which our imagination fails of—our imagination represents Him material, our reason immaterial; our fancy corporeal, our reason spiritual and incorporeal, wise, powerful, perfect, the sovereign being of beings; and it is a natural impression in our soul, which then exerts itself, and most appears when we reason best. But, indeed, all our certainty of natural things begins at our senses, by the sense or impression of the things themselves, or their operations. And yet, though I see not nor touch many things with my organs, because imperceptible, that all I do proceeds from some cause, my understanding certainly concludes.

It was the vain objection of Vaninus, that, were there a God and Providence, He would hinder men from sinning against Him. But power is either absolute, or tempered with justice, clemency, and other virtues. By His absolute power He is able to effect all things, but, as just and merciful, He does not. For, though he permits sin to exercise our obedience and make trial of our virtue, He gives thereby occasion also of manifesting His love and favour. Without this, we had never come to know the infinite degrees and extent of it, since it is reward and punishment that produce love, fear, and obsequiousness: forasmuch as God is pleased to act with mankind as with a rational creature, and by such methods and objects as He is pleased to propose, and not altogether by blind and casual impressions. Unless we understood the unfathomable depths of His infinite knowledge, wisdom, and other attributes, we can never

safely pronounce concerning the reason of His actions, who educes good out of evil, by expedients and ways most just and reasonable.

From all, then, we have alleged in proof of a Deity, it can hardly be that there ever was such a monster as a thorough-paced, speculative Atheist in the world. A small and superficial insight into nature might, perhaps, as my Lord Verulam says, dispose some sort of men to think there were no God; but a thorough and deeper research will make it impossible: so convincing is every thing in Nature. And when all is said, it is every good and wise man's interest and advantage to believe a Deity; for, supposing (but by no means granting) that there were none, this infidelity has so many sad consequences attending it, and the other so infinite advantages accompanying it, that a wise man would live as if there were, though there were none, as certainly, by all that we have shown, there is. And, when our atheist has produced all he has to say against it, it is still more difficult and inconsistent to prove the negative. All Nature cries out; all nations, ages, people, sciences; all consequences, the chain and ligature of all subordinate things; universal consent, both of learned and unlearned, civil or barbarous; the consequence of all Providence; all reasoning, all the arts and sciences; astronomy, by the motion of the celestial bodies; jurisprudence, by all that is just and equal; history, by innumerable events; morality, by every virtue; nature, by all her operations; all the philosophers, by their most accurate researches; and Aristotle himself, by his

acknowledgment of subordinate motion leading to the First Mover; Des Cartes, by his free choice of a superior intelligence, confining matter to a particular motion and quantity, and that nothing but a Prime Cause can produce thought or any thinking principle in an organic body: in sum, even the wild and extravagant motion of Epicurus's atoms and different determinations of them in such perfect creatures, do all of them demonstrate the being of a God and of His providence.

In a word, our senses, imaginations, consciences, passions, and even all our faults, the voice of every sin, (fearing a future punishment) aloud proclaim it. To conclude, be the event what it will, he who believes a God hazards nothing valuable, should he be mistaken (as it is not possible he should); but he who does not, or but doubts of it, is infinitely miserable; there being no medium or proportion between the trifling satisfaction we deny ourselves so short a time, by living well and orderly, and the eternal damnation of a vicious infidel and obstinate Atheist. Nay, admitting the probabilities equal, our passions and wicked inclinations indeed would have no God; but the interest of our reason, conscience, health, and other benefits of virtue and sobriety, the contrary.

Were there no God in the world, virtue were a chimera,—common honesty, folly,—fidelity, simpleness and ridiculous folly. Who would trust his nearest neighbour or relation? All governments, safety, and propriety, would disband and vanish. Truth, justice, humility, charity, temperance, sincerity, and friendship—

in short, all that elevates our nature above other creatures—would expire.

And now to conclude this long, but necessary chapter: if all these arguments will not prevail, no miracle will, nor ever can. For, (as that noble Chancellor[1] has observed) though we read of many illustrious miracles, which it pleased God to work upon other occasions, we never read that He vouchsafed to work so much as *one*, to evince the truth of His own existence, power, wisdom, and beneficence, for the establishment of natural religion, or to convince one obstinate Atheist. Since even the light of nature were sufficient, and the wonders that are daily the objects of our senses, the miracles of every moment, though we are blinded by the commonness of them, and so do not sufficiently heed them. Else we should confess that everything we see and enjoy is a miracle, and such as can be no other than the effects of a Divine and Almighty power. Indeed, other extraordinary favours have sometimes been showed to heathens and idolators, who acknowledged a deity, though they erred, of ignorance and not of obstinacy, about his worship: but never to any professedly believing none; because it is plainly monstrous, prodigious, unnatural, impious, and ungrateful, beyond all reproach or sufferance.

[1] Lord Bacon.

CHAPTER II.

WHAT GOD AND THE SUPREME BEING IS.

SECTION I. HIS ATTRIBUTES.
SECTION II. OF ANGELS AND MINISTERING SPIRITS.
SECTION III. OF THE INTELLECTUAL SOUL.

SECTION I. HIS ATTRIBUTES.

The felicity of man consisting in the contemplation of the highest Cause, we have already, by undeniable arguments, asserted the being of such a Cause. By the light of nature, we are convinced of His existence—by the light of grace, of His essence: Reason dictating the first, Revelation the latter. And yet to determine positively what God is, was thought so difficult, nay, so impossible, that not only Simonides, (in his famous reply to Hiero) but not any one of the philosophers were able to solve the question, farther than to acknowledge that He was a Being that gave to all things their being. There were, indeed, of the Physici, (as the Ionians named them) who, degenerating into Atheism, and making all the result of motion and matter, wholly left out the Divine Cause. Whilst others, on the contrary, left out the natural and necessary cause, and held that God was all things, and all things God; not

distinguishing the Creator from the creature; and so made inanimate bodies under several forms the substance of God Himself. That God, containing all things in himself, upon a time displayed and brought them forth, as being what is said of Isis, ἓν καὶ πάντα. Indeed, this *All-in-one* and *One-in-all* doctrine (so admirably pursued by Hermes in the Asclepian dialogue) may in some sort be true; as when he calls him the radix, or root of all; but these did not penetrate the thing, but as a cause, not the definition; much less his attributes, which they could never comprehend to fix in one. The whole *consessus* of the Heathen deities had their several powers; but that any single deity had them all they judged impossible. Those who come nearest in their notions, made God the mundane soul; as for instance Seneca;[1] and Pythagoras cited by Clemens to the same effect.

This they had from Thales, Anaximenes, and the rest, who made him all the elements, denoting his universal and immense extent and influence. But then this must be taken with reference to His power and omnipotence only. For otherwise, should God be the soul of the universe, (as we understand the soul) how should the human soul be happy and unhappy at the same moment? As when in one place, or member of any animate creature, it is sensible of pain and torture, whilst it is pleased and delighted in another, according as the matter, or animal, happens to be affected with

[1] Quid est Deus? Meus Universalis.
Nat. Quæst. i. *Præf.*

the universal soul which animates it? This, therefore, is to be taken for that diffusion of life and motion which God does universally impart to His creature, nay, the whole creation, and not as being any part of His divine substance, which is altogether incommunicable. So as what this great God *formally* is, though He dwell in the light, it is a light not to be approached by us, by reason of the thick darkness which environs it, (like that described by Moses on Mount Sinai at the promulgation of the law) or rather the darkness of our understandings to comprehend it.

Wherefore the wisest of philosophers endeavoured to describe Him rather by what He appears in the creature, and the wondrous works which declare His power and wisdom. Not that He is like to any of them for any eminence or perfection in them; but as they approach Him in virtue and goodness, they may be so far said to have a resemblance of Him in a moral sense; whatever is excellent being an emanation from Him. *Nostri melior pars animus est, in illo nulla pars extra animum, totus ratio est.* The soul is our best part; God is all soul, the noblest part, for He is All. And when we are able to define what that part of us is which has no parts, we shall be best capable to say what He is, who is All. Till then, men may rack their wits and study high and lofty notions, but never shall they come to know positively what He is, but rather by what He is not. He is yet all we see, but all we see is not God. All things (says Trismegistus) that are and that are not. Those that are He has manifested from Himself; those

that are not, He contains in Himself. They come to know positively what He is, but rather by what He is not. He is yet all we see; but all we see is not God.[1] How is it possible we should know what He is, (so as to define Him) who know not ourselves, namely, that which makes us what we are, our souls? When we come to know the God within us,[2] (as Seneca says) we may then come nearer to the mark; but it is not visible to us yet. No; not though He be every moment in us, near us, and about us.[3] Whence the notion of an intellectual sphere, whose centre was every where, circumference no where. Thus the philosophers called Him Friendship, Fate, Nature, the Sovereign Good: in a word, they described Him by His attributes; nor was there any of them left out, which some of their wise men did not expressly mention: so as Minutius tells us, one might in his days have thought the new Christians had been philosophers, or the old philosophers Christians. Thus Plato calls him the Idea of the most consummate perfection; Aristotle,[4] the Being of

[1] I find this prettily explained in that of *Ocellus* (in Stobæo). "Life," says he, "contains the body of animals; the cause of life is the soul—concord contains houses, cities, estates; the cause of concord is law, and the fountain of law is God."

[2] "Deum in humano corpore hospitantem."

Sen. Ep. 31.

[3] Parmenides and Hesiod made Love the supreme Deity; Love being an active principle, and cause of motion; and indeed it is the first and greatest; for God is Love and Beneficence; whence all this theogony and cosmogony springs.

[4] Lib. de Rel.

Beings, whose "*miserere*" he is said to have implored at his last agony.

Nor did the ancient Pagans intend any more by their several names than the divers attributes of one Deity, representing them all. Seldom do we hear them imploring these deputy gods, when they were in distress, but held up their hands to heaven, the seat of Jupiter, not to the Capitol, or Pantheon, where all their statues were enshrined; which Tertullian notes as "concurrent testimony of *Unity*." And thus, whilst without God in the world, did the Heathen grope after Him, though He was not far from any one of them. For what was Jupiter but the true Jehova? So Macrobius, from a certain oracle that the Supreme Deity was to be called *Jaö*.[1] Lastly, touching the unity of God, (besides what we have alleged) the very poets, who took the greatest liberty to set off and adorn their fictions with the introduction of so many deities, spake but of one, when serious: nor did Plato mention more, when in earnest—

Εἷς Ζεὺς σὺν σοφίᾳ δυνατός θ' ἅμα καὶ πολυ-όλβος.

One God, wise, omnipotent, and happy; for so Phocylides

[1] So when Thales makes him *Water*, Anaximenes *Air*, Heraclitus and Hippocrates *Fire*, the first born Light, &c., they meant but the vast expanse of matter. And those who held He was a body, and that qualities and forms were entities only distinct from body, intended only, substance. Hence Ἡ ἀληθινὴ σοφία, οὐσία, κὴ ἡ ἀληθινὴ οὐσία, σοφία. Solid wisdom is substance, and Truth has real existence. To the same purpose Heraclitus Ponticus, Alexander Aphrodisæus, Theophrastus, Zeno, &c.

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sums up His attributes in one verse; and it was the creed of the Platonists universally. To these agree the sybils; and it has been the voice of their very oracles, who sometimes are forced to speak the truth, as the unclean spirits to our Blessed Saviour: "*I know thee who thou art, the Holy one of God.*"[1] From all which has been said may be collected this definition (even from the suffrages of Pagans only) that God is one perfect conscious intellect, mind, and being, existing from all eternity, and giving being to all things.

But to leave the Heathen a while to the light of nature; remarkable is that which Justin Martyr relates in his dialogue with Trypho, the Jew, that, being extremely inquisitive of the nature and attributes of God, after he had consulted all the philosophers, and run through their sects, he professes they none of them could give him any satisfaction, till he happened to meet an ancient, venerable person, that was a Christian. Let us, therefore, see what their thoughts and conceptions are, and how they define Him from Divine revelation: we say Divine revelation, for that none can tell what God is, but God Himself. From His mouth, then, His holy oracles, we have the most conspicuous manifestations of His perfections, and in Christ, the most express image of His person. But the depth still remains as to any adequate definition of those incomprehensible perfections. For when we shall have said all we can, God is still the same uninvestigable nature; the most known, and yet the most unknown. Than

[1] St. Luke, iv., 34.

His being and existence nothing is more plain and evident; than his essence and nature, nothing more obscure and concealed. This yet we may safely affirm, that He is a pure and total act, without matter or form.[1] He is one uncreated mind, a perfect and incorporeal existence, a real substantial spirit, comprehending Himself—the infinite extent of his unlimited power—the possibility of all things, and their intelligible postures, together with an example or idea of the universe. In a word, He is all beyond all we can conceive; and therefore did the very Heathen define Him rather by abstracting all imperfections, than undertake to declare what positively He was. We therefore best conceive Him by His glorious and Divine attributes; which yet differ nothing from His essence, though, in respect to us frail creatures, incapable of comprehending all things by a single act, they seem to be different notions. But there is the Almighty God, great without quantity, good without quality; just and merciful without passion or partiality; everywhere without motion; in heaven itself without place; comprehending all, comprehended by none. Thus far were the Gentiles orthodox. But what they had from the light of nature, we

[1] God is *Eternal*, without cause, beginning, time, or succession.
Omnipresent, filling all things, yet without parts or extension.
Omnipotent, able to educe and create out of nothing, and reduce to nothing.
Omniscient of past, present, future to continuance, and every thought before we think, and that without imposing any fatal necessity on human action.

Christians have by that of His word, wherein He has most plainly communicated Himself to be a spiritual, immaterial substance, almighty, powerful, eternal, wise, holy, just, merciful, supreme God.[1] This whilst the Heathens could not reach, nor how it was possible for so much perfection to be in one; they assigned the several attributes to distinct and several powers, among which they held one supreme. But let us now consider His attributes more particularly.

SECTION I.

PART I. GOD'S ATTRIBUTES.

1. We may safely pronounce God to be a most pure and simple being. For, had his existence any mixture or composition, then must the ingredients (at least some of them) be the First Cause, or principle. Now, that which was first has no parts or dimensions, and is therefore pure and incorporeal, and, if so, uncircumscribable, and immense; having nothing to do with place or *ubi* in the manner of bodies: and so of necessity *infinite*, and of infinite there can be but *one*, two or more infinites being contradictory.

2. Next is evident that God is a spirit immaterial. For indeed there may be substance without matter. We commonly fancy substance to be only something of bulk and body; whereas a spiritual substance is a puis-

[1] Not obscurely revealed in His tremendous name, Jehovah, which the Jews say none have ever known how to pronounce, and therefore use *Adonai* as Lord, instead of it. *Jah* signifying *ens*, or existence, the *I Am* declared to Moses out of the fiery bush.

sant, intellectual being, without dimension, figure, parts, or passions, and therefore no more the object of sight than the clearest air, nor of our touch, than is light; and consequently not susceptible of the laws of matter, to be rarified and condensed; nor immoveable till something moves it, as matter is. We must therefore conceive God as a substance, yet as incorporeal, and not an immense gross matter. For, were He such, there could be no other matter or substance in the universe. He is, therefore, not any corporeal substance.

Moreover, this incommixture and simple purity of parts and principles, being yet of nearest resemblance to light; He is often called the Father of Light, but of such a light as is unapproachable either to our eyes, or clearest understanding. However, the Father of Spirits, who communicates so much to the material world, may be thought to hold a nearer and more immediate communion with our souls than with our bodies; as seeming to be that to the mind in us, which the sun is to the eye, but still by a very faint resemblance. This, therefore, is only to show, that, whatever is most pure and transcendently excellent in the creature, is so superlatively in the Creator. Nor can we imagine the author of all Beauty, Glory, Wisdom, Knowledge, Power, and all Perfection, to be less Glorious, Pure, Prudent, and consummately Perfect, than the things which He has made.

3. The next incommunicable attribute is his *Infinity*; and this necessarily implies his Eternity. Something of necessity must be eternal, else nothing (as we proved) could be anything. All things showing their being

from one, that being must be from ever; seeing that nothing can make impression on, destroy, or alter Him, who gave all being and power to all things.[1] He is an everlasting *now*, or instant. Hence that of God to Moses, *I am*. He was before all things, who is all things to and in Himself.[2]

In the mean while, there is nothing so distractingly incomprehensible of the Sovereign Being, and about which our deepest research is more at a loss, than the notion of infinite and eternal, be it person, time, or space; not because it may be of itself inexplicable, but because we have no instruments, tools, or faculties, capable of comprehending it, or to work on a thing so much abstracted from matter, and things which fly our senses, common or intellectual, viz., that anything should never have had being, or shall have ending. God yet cannot exist without this perfection, it being absolutely essential to His being. When, therefore, we hear of difference of time to God, it is spoken to support the weakness of our capacities, which cannot conceive anything without it. And to this attribute of eternity did all the Heathens give suffrage,[3] it being so plain that nothing can pass into actual being without a foregoing cause; and if no cause could give being, nothing can take it away, and so it must be eternal.

[1] This is called by Boëthius an entire fruition of interminable life and felicity, at once and together, which distinguishes it from the eternity of souls, whose eternal being *has commencement*.

[2] Tertullian. Theophylact.

[3] Aristot. De Cœlo, l. 2.

Thus we have abundantly showed that God is either essentially and of Himself, or from some other principle: that if He have beginning, it must be from some fountain or source which always ran, and never stopped. If He had no beginning, He must be self-existent; and there is no medium; we must for the rest acknowledge a subordination of causes and effects even to infinity, which were absurd; or else be driven to confess a necessity of existence, whence all His other attributes flow; whence all our qualities in like manner proceed, from the virtue of second causes, communicating something to us which before we had not. And thence it is necessary that the measure of these qualities should be governed by the measures and power of the agent.

Now, when a Being has all that it has from itself, his attributes and perfections become infinite and unconfined. And this Infinite, for being but one, creates that *unity* in the Deity so little heretofore understood by even the wisest Heathen.[1] That, indeed, which induced the less reasonable and discerning to fancy more than one, was, as we have showed, their conceit that so many perfections were not competent to no more; besides the vain ambition of others who affected Deity themselves, as flatterers made them. Hence Alexander had been almost persuaded by sycophants, till, being wounded, he saw his blood, and grew faint. The rest, forsooth, would be heroes, at least sprung from gods; and it was the desire of most great cities and countries

[1] See Tertullian adver. Mar., l. i, c. 10. Hermes Trismegistus, Asclep. Dialog. Sen. de Benef., l. iv., c. 7.

to have each their tutelary deities. Also from the stupid and carnal idea of brutish people, who fancied their deities to marry and propagate like men; from which impertinent fiction sprung the multiplicity of idols. Not considering that were there a plurality of Supreme Powers, they could not be gods. Unity, then, of perfection needs noting, as possessing all things in itself; and if so, not multiplicable; many Infinites being inconsistent. We never read of two monarchs ruling together, whatever we call them by solecism; and even colleagues have seldom lasted without jealousy or open hostility. Cæsar and Pompey could not agree, and majesties, as well as rivals in love, never sit on the same throne. *Aut Cæsar, aut nihil.*

We have in the former chapter made appear how this Oneness is vindicated by everything in nature, as well as polity. One father of a family—one king in a kingdom—one shepherd of the flock—one ox in the herd—one mistress bee. Never was any house or kingdom divided that could stand: *Almighty* is God's proper name: He being but One, has no name but one; and in that alone is comprehended King, Lord, Father, and Master. He is our shepherd, and we are the sheep of His pasture, as David, divinely. In sum, whatsoever implies Oneness, cogitating all the parts of matter. This was that one mind, or spirit, interiorly operating; and, therefore, as Plato so eminently, as we observed, calls Him God in the singular, to attest truth. Indeed, the Romans had a prejudice to this unity, especially that of the Christian persuasion, pretending they subdued the

world without His assistance; several portents happening amongst them, as they fancied, confirming their opinions, as is summarily set down by Minutius Felix, recited to his Cæcilius, where he describes the Pagan systems, not much unlike that of Epicurus, of old, and our later Atheists, who ascribe all to chance or *transelementation*. And as to other human vicissitudes, to uncertain fortunes, through the lazy humour of concluding, without sober reasoning. But to this they attributed their successes, namely, to the tropical and regionary deities, and their entertaining so numerous a train of gods and goddesses; in this, perhaps, more reverend, that whereas other nations were wont to blaspheme the vanquished gods as cowards, and weekly, they honoured and received them so kindly, as to chain some in their temples and oratories, lest they should get away and forsake them.

But to speak no more of this so oft repeated. Two causes are impossible; for that all things should depend on one, while there are more independent beings, are contradictions insufferable; and if more gods, then were not all perfections in one God; and so one should have power, the other none; and they might have contrary determinations and wills concerning the same thing; which soon would dissolve all government; whereas God is a God of order,[1] the God Sabaoth, and is, therefore, so One, as no unity in the world is besides; and yet, not that one, as a species, comprehending

[1] Isai., xlv., 5, 6, 30 — xxi., 23, 24 — also xliv., 8; Deut., xiv., 35, and xxxii., 39; Ps., xviii., 13; John, xvii., 3.

many individuals, nor as a body divisible, and that He has parts or extremes; but simply one, as nothing is so one. If God were not one, he were nothing; if more than one, men would be to seek which to worship, and fluctuate upon various and uncertain objects. In a word, all irrational agents are His creatures, and the rational His children; for, as a Father, he begets us; as a Father, maintains and nourishes us: so far as the mere act of creation may be styled generation, God is our Father; for in Him we live, and move, and have our being.[1] We are indeed the sons of men, when we do amiss; when well, the sons of God: agreeably to that of the philosopher, That God was the common parent of all, but more particularly of good men.[2]

4. *Omnipotence,* which in nothing more appears than in His educing something out of nothing; of which we have spoken at large. For in regard of His eternal right and power of making, what, when, and how He pleases; of possessing whatever He makes; of using and disposing as seems good to Him, His power is absolute. So infinitely do some extol His omnipotence, that Lactantius unwarily seems to intimate, as if the Deity produced even Himself; namely, such as He willed Himself to be; and so be the cause of Himself.[3] But this is extravagant: nor did God result from chance or necessity of nature, as if His being were imposed on Him;

[1] Tertull. adv. Marc., l. i., c. 5.

[2] Plutarch, in vit. Alex.

[3] Plotinus.

but He is as much that which He would be, as if He had made himself.

He is able to do all things not repugnant to His nature; as to be sick, or die, or be false.[1] He can do all He *will*, though He do not all He *can;* that is, all that can be done, and implies no dishonour or contradiction to His veracity and excellency, as St. Augustine[2] says. In respect of all other objects and actions, His power knows no bounds; nor were all His other attributes anything, without it, but speculative notions. And whatever dominion others may have of mankind, one peculiar title has God, which none but He can have over us, that He gives us our being, and is of right our Sovereign Lord and Potentate. God's omnipotence, then, consists in an ability to do whatever can be done, and the object of this power is whatever is possible. But what is impossible is no adequate object of power, but destroys it, rather, and dishonours it; as that He should undo the past, make another God like himself; destroy[3] or deprive his own substance, or corporify and change it. God is with all reverence said not to do that which belongs to no power. The same is affirmable of His infinity and of His telling the last number, because there is no end or determination of either: since, were there any end, it could not be infinite; and the greatest possible notation of number may be in-

[1] S. Aug. Enchir.

[2] Velint invenire quod Omnipotens non potest, habent prorsus, ego dicam, mentiri non potest. S. Aug. De Civ. Dei, lib. xxii., c. 25.

[3] See Maimon. De Naturâ Imposs.

finitely doubled. In a word, whatever God is said not to effect, or to be impossible, proves not any impotence, but rather shows that all His other attributes and perfections are as essential to Him as His Power; and as His power suffers no resistance, so neither do the rest of His perfections admit any repugnance. But, in all events, it is safer to say what He never *will* do, rather than positively what he *cannot* do.[1] "Is anything too hard for the Lord?"

Nor is the Almighty more powerful than *just* and *righteous;* so as He never does or can abuse His power. Justice and rectitude is His nature. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"—Shall He not take cognizance of all injustices, vindicating the injured, as the very Fountain of Justice? It was for this the ancients had recourse to the gods in their solemn oaths and appeals, as to whom all must render account of their actions, for the reward or reproof of Him, who only distributes them. Wherefore, it were the greatest defect in so Divine a nature, not to recompense goodness and virtue, and punish wickedness and vice, because it were unjust; and as well might we deny all Providence, and even God Himself, as to deny Him justice. For if He be an intellectual being, he comprehends all possible actions, be they good or bad; the one being agreeable to Him, and nearest to His excellent nature: the other, contradictory and repugnant.

[1] Genesis, xviii., 14; S. Aug. De Civ. Dei, lib. v., c. 10; Hierome ad Marc., 5; Seneca Præf. Nat. Quest. Gregory Nazianz.

His justice and dealing must needs be accordingly, and thus are all God's attributes chained and linked to each other, never to be sundered. His wisdom shows he cannot be deceived; His omnipotence proves He has no need to deceive; His goodness declares His unwillingness to deceive; and all of them assert his exact and impartial justice.

5. *Truth:*—God has sworn by Himself, because there is none greater; not that it is possible He should be false, but to support our diffidence, and want of faith. For otherwise it is as impossible for God to lie without an oath, as with one.[1] The virtue of His veracity is not fortified by an asseveration of God, as to its being true; but from the nature of God, who cannot equivocate, or dissemble. It is inconsistent with His purity; a contradiction to His integrity; repugnant to His justice, and averse to his goodness, to deliver anything contrary to His certain knowledge; and therefore He cannot wrong any one. His testimony is truth itself; and accordingly, exacts our assent. Truth is the foundation of God's authority, the source of His omnipotence, and the only support and stay of all our confidence.

6. *Goodness, Beneficence, and Love:* God does not govern arbitrarily, upon the sole account of His power and will, but as His will is the will and law of justice and highest reason. Nor does He punish any, but for their good, and to make them better. To conceive rightly of God, is to figure in our minds an existence of all possible goodness, justice, truth, and other divine

[1] Hebrews, vi., 18.

virtues, and that all things are in Him as they should be; and the universal system so framed and governed, as nothing could be more perfect, or possibly improved, however things may appear to our shallow comprehension. For as He is the source of all good, so all that He created was good, yea, very good. God, as a free agent, undetermined by anything but His own good pleasure, spreads His goodness and beneficence over all His creatures; and this it is that entitles Him to the universal empire, even above omnipotence itself. His mercy, as David says, is over all His works. Nor, indeed, is there any majesty without goodness. Take away the notion of goodness from God, and none would serve Him, none seek Him sincerely. It is His goodness leads sinners to repentance, and repentance from fear alone is unacceptable. Yet so gracious is God, that He does good even to the evil, as well as to the good; not that they may continue evil, but because He is superabundant in mercy and goodness. All our evil is from ourselves—all that is good in us, from Him.

The whole universe, and the provisions it affords us, and all His creatures, declare His beneficence;[1] and so conspicuous is this attribute, as to be celebrated above all the rest. Indeed, creation is an attribute belonging to God alone; and so is all nature, all substance, good. For God did not create evil, nor its effects, Death and Sin, which are neither nature nor substance, but enemies and foes to both. Evil has no existence, but as an accident fallen unhappily into sub-

[1] See Seneca De Benef.

stance, and has no other being of itself.[1] Nor is it an *effect*, but *defect*.[2] When things, therefore, deflect from goodness, it is chaos, and darkness, and nothing. Now, if there be any other evils in the world, they are so only to our ignorance. For even the deleterious and noxious juices, &c., of plants, repugnant elements, and contrary seasons, are all of them good and profitable to us in time and place, and spring from the fountain of all goodness. If we know not the use of them, it is our ignorance: and if they do us hurt, our own fault. For every thing has two handles, a right one, and a left, a tractable and untractable; and a wise man takes hold of the first.[3] God has not hid and concealed these things out of envy and want of goodness, but to exercise our reason, incite our industry, and excite our devotion. They, therefore, infinitely dishonour Him, who deny God philanthropy,[4] whereas God is all goodness and love; the most illustrious proof of which (till we come to speak of the work of His redemption) is His

7. *Providence;* by which He operates insensibly and imperceptibly; which shows the spirituality of His being, penetrating all things. However events seem to us, we should never cease to admire and praise God,[5]

[1] Evil is an omission of good, and has nothing solid and real, but as it may be of kindred to that, indeed, of which God made the world, namely, nothing, as tending to nothing.

[2] Plato In Timæo. Plotinus, &c.

[3] Πᾶν πράγμα δύο ἔχει λαβάς."—Epictet. [4] Hobbs.

[5] Πάντα θαυμάζειν, πάντα ἐπαινεῖν, πάντα ἀνεξεταστῶς ἀποδέχεσθαι, τὰ τῆς προνοίας ἔργα, κἂν φαίνεσθαι πόλλοις ἄδικα, διὰ τὸ ἄγνωστον εἶναι, κ.τ.λ.—Damas. De C. F., ii., 29.

being sure there is both a just and reasonable cause, though to us for the present undiscernible. In the mean time, He ceases not to take care of every accident, that every thing proceed without the least interruption, in order to the whole. This care over His works, so extensive as not a sparrow lights on the ground, not a hair of our head falls without His observance and permission; even things without reason participating, as well as mankind, in the method of the Almighty's Providence, proceeding in order to the good and preservation of the whole. Yea, and the most contrary things He makes to be useful; so as he who denies Providence, denies and affronts God.

It is plainly stupendous, that any person to whom God has given a rational soul, and faculties to consider and distinguish, should at any time cast his eyes upon even the least work of Nature, without at the same time lifting them up in admiration at the wise order, economy, and disposition of its several objects. In short, and to sum up all, (because we have already largely discussed this matter in the former chapter) God did by His divine and eternal counsel purpose to create a world, which He has formed by the most perfect idea He had designed, and to support and preserve and keep up the compages by a powerful influx and perpetual emanation; governing all by such laws and ordinances, methods and motives, as they observe and subsist by; the several courses and periods of the celestial bodies; the influences, actions, and vicissitudes of generation and corruption in terrestrial bodies;

various affections and alterations of them; sensible perfections of some creatures; instincts of other animals; rational and free agents, from the smallest insect to mankind; and all these to be by standing ordinances and invariable decrees and rules; God foreseeing all possible events, that there needed no repairs or further supplement of any of His acts, or, as is necessary to human laws and establishments, by reason of their imperfection. For thus, by His particular Providence, every minute thing has been considered,—by his general care, the whole; especially by Divine laws and institutes extends He His providence over men and angels, in relation to their eternal condition; as shall be shown, when we come to speak of the dictates of those oracles which declare the work of man's redemption. In the mean time, the wretched meanness and unworthiness of man renders his intercourse with God the more admirable, but not incredible. The sun illuminates the lower world, the humble valleys, obscure recesses, without any diminution of his glory or stopping of his career. So God acts on the least dust He has made, the most despicable worm that crawls, without trouble, as the soul in the body; or, like the centre of a circle, that receives all the lines drawn from it, though extended to every part, without the least confusion; ever by one single motion and energy governing all other motions, without the least toil or labour. And this He does every moment, without any diminution to His majesty, from the inconsiderableness of the subject, as to our appearance; on the contrary, the exility of the

creature and workmanship heightens the skill and excellency of the artist.

And nothing more clearly shows the immense power of the Almighty, than to consider how a lump of clay and dust should contain a mind that knows itself and so many other things. Nothing more celebrates His wisdom, than to see how He foresees all actions ere they are done, and brings to pass good out of evil. Nothing so much His justice, as His universally condemning the crime, even before it be perpetrated; knowing the intentions of our hearts, and the motions of all men's thoughts: so as no distance of place, or darkness, can hide from His all-seeing eye, who observes all, suffers all, that He may reward and punish all accordingly, and do all this to the best end. We cannot, therefore, think of God, but as of a being most perfect and honourable. Such a being can have no obliquity, no defect—can do nothing unworthy of His nature. Nor has He any need, as men have, for political concerns, to proceed by indirect courses to accomplish any of His glorious works or purposes, being Himself Almighty in power, wisdom, and righteousness.

8. *Omnipresence:* for how should God else provide for the necessities of such a household of things, places, and persons, so far and remote? In which nothing more resembles Him than light or air, which insinuates itself, and pervades the most distant and obscure recesses. Nothing in nature can subsist one moment without His actual presence. For thus, in all places and at all times, He hears our prayers, takes notice of

our actions, yea, knows our most secret thoughts, before they discover themselves. He sees all that He has made in their causes, whilst we frail creatures distinguish by parcels. In a word, He looks on all the world but as one house. From this omnipresence of God results His

9. *Knowledge.* He who has power infinite has knowledge so likewise. How else should He comprehend the use and exercise of His infinite power, wisdom, providence, and other attributes? Universal, therefore, is His knowledge, from the highest heaven to the lowest centre, from the greatest magnitude to the minutest grain of sand. And so likewise (as we have said) of goodness and beneficence, justice, and all other virtues, which in the best of men are but shadows and little drops; for the infiniteness of His power and understanding would, without these, bring confusion instead of order, and destruction instead of conservation.[1] Without knowledge, He could not be wise; but that He is

10. *Wisdom* itself, all His actions and works declare. For by wisdom He made the world, and has maintained it ever since. Indeed there is, to say truth, no wisdom but God's. All the wisdom and knowledge in the world is but stark folly, in comparison with His. And what we know, we know but in part; and that little scantling, whereby we excel other creatures, is but a ray

[1] Upon this account, Thales, Pythagoras, Plato, Epictetus, and the rest, have concluded Him to be a sweet and noble mind; Zenophantes and Clearchus, the highest reason.

from Him, a small gleam from this Fountain of Light. Man understands by reasoning, and loves by passion, and when all is done, with never so much labour and industry, it is full of irregularity, doubts, and obnoxious to mistakes. But God is infallible, reasonable, comprehensive, pure; in Him is all light, and no darkness at all. To fancy a God without wisdom and knowledge is to figure him a stock, not a God. Whatever is the first cause knows all the effects of that cause, and so successively all other causes eternally: namely, the *ideas* of all existences, events, and accidents: times past, present, and future, as being all of them in the Divine mind, that infinite abyss of understanding; in the full contemplation whereof is the beatific vision of God Himself.[1] All things, which we see and know, have their existence for some end. None whatever have such a being for the same end. Of that there must be thought a cause; and a final cause is no otherwise the cause of anything, than as it moves the efficient cause to work. Whence we cannot but collect the prime efficient cause of all things to be endued with the most consummate wisdom, which has a full comprehension of the ends and events of all designs, productions, and disposal of all things to those ends. So as, whatever has its operation to some end, must be directed to it by some means; which though man can make choice of, proportionable for the obtaining of it, yet other natural agents, proceeding from mere instinct, cannot do so. The water never deliberates whether it shall wet, nor

[1] S. Aug. de Civ. Dei, l. 12, c. 18.

the fire whether it shall burn and consume; nor does a root consult whether it shall spring or wither; nor use we ourselves any deliberation in natural actions, without which we yet cannot subsist a single moment. The motion of the heart, the circulation of the blood, distribution of nourishment, perform their several functions after we have eaten and drunk, to these ends, not as we, but as God has ordained them; yet are they all directed to their proper ends, and that with the greatest reason, and, therefore, greater wisdom, than ever flowed from any thing save God, and His power, wisdom, and knowledge, who is the Director to those ends, and for which He gave them beings.[1]

11. *Immutable.* Now, so perfect and complicate are all these God's attributes, that there needs no addition; and therefore He is *Immutable*, without change, or so much as shadow of change, either in His nature, works, or resolutions. There are some bold men who question, nay, deny God's prescience and foreknowledge of human actions, as inconsistent with His liberty. For, say they, if man's actions be free, then are they unforeknown, as having no necessary cause; whereas, it is certain that prescience does not destroy men's wills, or impose necessity on them; nor are their actions therefore future, because foreknown, but quite the contrary. God, in a sense of perfection, is of all the freest agent; nor is contingent liberty denied to Him; but it is rather one of the privileges of God, to be devoid of free choice

[1] Ecclus., iv., 11, 12, 17, 18, 19; Wisd., vii., 22, 23, 24, 29—viii., 1, 4, 7, 8, 9, 17, 18, 21.

and judgment, as it implies imperfection, that is, all imperfection, peccability, or the least appearance of real change.[1] He is ever pleased with the same, who can delight in nothing but what is best. Nothing can diminish His power or liberty: nothing but His own natural perfection can dispose Him to any thing. In sum, nothing which already is consummately excellent can change to better, nor any wise being for a worse. All change proceeding from ignorance and folly, weakness and lassitude, and change would impair our love, confidence, and even fear of God Himself. To conclude, God being infinite in power, can do all things; and of infinite wisdom best disposes of all things, and has appointed to everything its limit, or left them a dispositive ability of their own concerns. And some things He will have governed by a law of necessity, others of contingency, at least in respect of our understanding how things happen. For nothing of all this falls out, but He foresees it and has decreed it, and therefore it is no derogation of His power. Nor yet is all this by distinct acts, or peculiar attributes, in reference to God, but only in relation to our capacity. Nor discovers it the least mutability in the Divine counsels. For His prescience is not the necessary cause of contingency or necessity; but therefore God foreknows them, because they shall so happen. Nor by this is His power restrained, that is, by either necessity or contingency, seeing whatever He determined

[1] Statuerunt quæ non mutârunt, nec unquam primi consilii Deos pœnitet.—*Sen. de Ben.*

was and is, so as nothing can be more just, or more excellent. And being still a free agent, He can and does alter things as to our understanding, though himself remain unsteady and unmoved. When God alters His dealings with men, according as they persist or fall, and defect from their duty, it is not from His mutability, but rather from His unchangeable justice and wisdom, which are ever the same.

Having asserted all these incommunicable perfections in the Godhead, I shall not need to mention any distinct one of His *holiness*, they being all of them so many parts of it, so as the nearer we come to any one of them, in conformity of our life, that is, imitating His justice, charity, wisdom, goodness, and truth, and all other Divine virtues, the more we shall resemble His holiness, who has said, Be ye holy, for I am holy, and that without holiness no man shall see the Lord.[1]

PART II.—TRINITY.

Now, as to the mystery of the sacred trinity, whereby God is by us Christians acknowledged to be One in essence, and of Three Persons, of which more in its proper place. The sun in the firmament is but one, and yet the fountain of light and heat; three distinct things, yet operating all at the same instant. The rational soul has three distinct powers—memory, understanding, will. Why may not there be three Hypostases in three Subsistences? They are indeed obscure

[1] I. Pet. l., 16; Heb., xii, 14.

resemblances, inasmuch as heat, light, memory, &c., are not the same thing with the sun or soul, but only emanations from them. But as these subjects are Divine, the *manner* is wholly incomprehensible. And if we be not capable of understanding things belonging to ourselves, as men, (such as is the union of our soul and body) how shall we ever hope to comprehend a mystery of so sublime a nature? Indeed, though it be unintelligible, Reason cannot pronounce it impossible; seeing that the Divine essence is not of the same nature as created substances. For though in the whole work of God there be no instance like to it, but that one and the same nature is always united in one substance; yet it is not consequent that the *Divine* nature may not subsist in three persons, however inconceivable to us, as not indeed falling under our sense.

That though the Divinity be as to His nature One in essence, yet that He is Three in Hypostasis we believe, not from anything our reason dictates, but from the word of God; and therefore by an act of pure faith: nor discovered to the world by any light of nature, but supernaturally revealed in time, and necessarily since revealed, to be believed. As to those explanations of councils and creeds, they have been piously set forth, and endeavoured to unfold, rather for peace-sake, and to silence all nice and eternal controversies, the falling into errors, as of those who held three Gods, or totally denied a Trinity of persons, than out of any confidence of being able to describe the mystery in all its profound dimensions. That which is therefore to be believed

and professed by us, is that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, is but *one* God; so as the Son is not the Father, nor the Spirit the Son, but distinct persons, through a certain propriety, competent to no being else. Farther than this, we are not able to inquire, but humbly, modestly, and soberly, acquiesce in what God has sealed up, and will have kept a secret.

This order yet we may find, that the Father is first; secondly, of Him, the Son; thirdly, the Holy Ghost of both; as being so in order of Nature. The Father begetting; the Son begotten; the Holy Ghost proceeding, to use the terms of Scripture:[1] Where, notwithstanding, we sometimes find one of the Persons proposed before the other upon occasion. But nowhere is the Sacred Trinity so conspicuously set forth as at the Baptism[2] of the Son. Moreover, the Holy Scriptures distinguish the Persons (not essentially, indeed, but hypothetically) as we have already observed; where the Holy Spirit's proceeding is not to be understood as produced, as some have pretended, but so as God the Father is of Himself, the Son is of the Father, and the Holy Ghost from Father and Son, co-equal, and co-eternal. To the Father is attributed the work of Creation; to the Son, the work of redemption; to the Holy Ghost, Sanctification. Not as if these three distinct offices did aught detract from the Deity; but for our better comprehension of their several parts, or opera-

[1] See I. Cor., xii., 4, 5, 6; II. Cor., xiii., 14; Gal., i., 3.

[2] S. Luke, iii., 21.

tions.[1] For all is from the Father, who made the world by His Son, the Spirit of both co-operating. Farther than this is rashness to go. We must admire and adore, but cannot hope to comprehend. It is a depth into which councils, and fathers, and churches, and the greatest wits, have fallen, and even lost themselves. God will be believed, not examined. It is, besides, a mystery, which no ways falls under the criterion of our senses even the most sagacious; whilst of no corporeal substance, (of which we may presume to judge, and are enjoined to do so, before we give assent) we are to reserve it for that blessed time, when we shall see God face to face, and as He is. It is sufficient, that here we know Him by His works in the Creation, His Word in Holy Scripture, in our souls and consciences by the light of nature and reason. But, as for this of the Holy Trinity and work of our redemption, and how He operates in the hearts of the faithful, their vocation, regeneration, justification, &c., we know nothing, but by the light of grace. It is enough as to the mystery, that whatsoever is predicated of God is God. Why should we pry into what the angels dare not look into, but cover their modest faces, whilst they sing Thrice Holy to the Thrice Holy Trinity? The Apostles asked not Christ; the Son has not revealed it; the Father conceals it, because we could not in this imperfect state comprehend it. We behold the majesty; we see not into the mystery. We know that God is, and what He is, namely, that He is a spirit, holy, just, good, wise,

[1] See I. Cor., viii., 6; Hebr., i., 2; S. John, x., 30.

omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent, immutable, and eternal; but we know not His substance.[1]

By the Christian Trinity we mean not the mere names, or a Trinity of words and logical notions only, but of persons, *apposita*, and *Hypostases*. The Uncreated, One True God, Blessed for ever, whose attributes of Incorporiety, Spirituality, Invisibility, Immateriality, Simplicity, Infinity, Eternity, Omnipotence, Omnipresence, Omniscience, Wisdom, Knowledge, Justice, Veracity, Immutability, Providence, and universal Perfections, are all but one simple, formal Act in God, distinguished thus for our comprehension only, some whereof are communicable in an inferior manner to the Creature, others wholly incommunicable, proper to God alone. And this is what we are allowed to look into and to gather of the existence and nature of God, both from His works and out of His Word, where we are taught to adore His Divine perfections in other mysteries, without dispute, which had all men learned, and done in simplicity, they had been more knowing and more happy; whilst there is nothing more becoming our Christian profession, or, indeed, as we are men, than an humble acknowledgment of our imbecility

[1] The Platonists had an obscure notion of a certain universal Psyche, or Holy Spirit, as S. Cyprian thought. The Chaldeans taught something of a Trinity. Plato also held that the *Monas* was the universal principle, which produced the duality, or matter for it to work upon. What the ancient poets and the philosophers Zoroaster, Trismegistus, &c., intimated by their *Trias*, may be seen in Origen against Celsus.

and limited faculties, to grapple with such stupendous mysteries.

We are likewise cautioned not to conceive of the Divine properties and attributes as proceeding by way of emanation out of one another, as frequently we understand some of them in the creature; but, as we have all along suggested, that whatever is said of them, as of God, are God Himself, one pure act, without confusion, or relation to time, flux, successive proceeding. But whether we consider them negatively removing impotence, imperfection, plurality, causes, accidents, &c., or positively, by the works God has made, we must conclude Him to be the most transcendently perfect and noble Being, and acknowledge that we can never reach an intuition of His being, which is impervestigable and past finding out. We may celebrate His praises, and do Him homage, and best speak of his excellencies, by our silent admiration, since no words of man or angel can worthily express Him.[1] He cannot be seen by our bodily eyes, or fathomed and comprehended by our weak conceptions. In a word, who thinks to comprehend the majesty of God, diminishes it, and shall be oppressed with its glory.

More useful, therefore, and profitable were it for us to know how to live well, and please this great and infinite God, than over-curiously to pry into these profound abysses, lest, our heads growing giddy, we fall, and drop into amazing depths, and be reproved. Let us look upon His works, and into His Word, and labour

[1] Min. Felix Octav.

to know Jesus Christ and Him crucified. It is more necessary to skill how to plough and sow, to eat and drink, than to know by what secret of nature and secret operations corn grows, and food does nourish us. He who fancies he can unriddle the Divine mystery, undervalues it; and he that would not undervalue it, must acknowledge it exceeds his comprehension. To conclude, then, after all we have said of God's attributes, we are not to receive them as names of essences, but of actions. Nor as if His existence were compounded of divers ingredients, things, or qualities: those which are attributed by way of negation, are real attributes; whilst affirmative properties are not applicable. We may better say what they are *not*, than what positively they be; but as to their *quiddity*, our knowledge is ignorance, and so unsafe it is to multiply affirmative attributes, that, as Maimonides says, we should stay till one of the Great Synagogue take the chair, and (as Evagrius) be tender of *definitions*, which, being conversant about things *concrete* only, have nothing to do with things abstracted. To sum up all: though Almighty God be but one, yet are all our faculties too narrow to contain it; none but His own uncreated nature, which is incomprehensible, can comprehend it. We see and know Him only by reflected light; wherefore, the more humble our contemplations of Him are, the nearer we shall come to Him; and the nearer we approach Him, the more shall we discern, and be amazed at, His endless perfections. For His ways are unsearchable, and His glorious essence past finding out.

And yet, though we cannot attain this desirable knowledge of Him here, there is so much to be learned, as is of infinite use, and absolutely necessary to our everlasting happiness, and preferable to all other sciences whatsoever. There is a congenite and connatural relation between the object of a Deity and a created intellect; and even between this incommensurable Being and our souls, which discovers its excellency, and from whence it is derived. For some knowledge of God is so essential to our felicity, that, albeit we cannot comprehend and know Him in His transcendent and incommunicable perfections, yet has He been graciously pleased to unfold so much of Himself as it is fit for us to know, and as we can possibly contain through the veil of our flesh, lest, by a more immediate intuition, we should be struck blind, and oppressed with its brightness.

And highly it concerns us to know Him, because He is our Creator, Father, Benefactor, and Saviour—our Supreme Good, and Ultimate End; from whom we receive all we know, all we have, and all we hope for. By Him it is we expect a glorious and eternal being hereafter. And these, His excellencies, none can know and seriously consider, but it must create and excite in him (though a Heathen) a moral necessity of loving, adoring, imitating, and serving Him, by all those virtuous habits and capacities which may render him most like to the Divine Being, whom so to know is life eternal and consummate happiness.

SECTION II. OF ANGELS AND MINISTERING SPIRITS.

I. THEIR NATURE.

Come we to what is next in the order of beings, namely, Angels and Spirits, and to souls intellectual; all of them separate substances, different from matter, and objects of our senses; the nearest both in existence and attributes, honour, and alliance to God, the first and most excellent of beings. We begin with Angels and Spirits, created and sent forth to attend on the God who created them,[1] and to minister to His other works, especially to man, who is in the next rank of His creatures, and though inferior to the excellency of their nature, is no way so by the dignity of his relation, as we shall come to show, when we speak of the man, Christ Jesus, who took[2] not the nature of angels on Him, but the seed of Abraham, and was and is *Incarnate God.*

Angels are Spirits, and immaterial substances, made to glorify God and perform His service, both in heaven, their mansions above, and in the inferior world. That such there are is not to be denied. For, if whatever appears besides the nature of corporeal beings, be not the actions and effects of separate souls, it must of necessity be of some other spirits, which did never animate bodies; by the ancients called Intelligences, for their excellent knowledge; creatures of a higher class and degree than those who have animated bodies, such as the souls of men. Nor is it to be doubted but that

[1] Hebr., i., 14. [2] Hebr. ii., 16.

there are degrees in the rank of beings, which, bordering on the extremes of some middle natures, compose that harmony in the Universe:[1] showing that there are no abrupt and precipitant transitions from one extreme to another, but by sweet and intermediate degrees, as may be instanced in all the elements and things of nature. Thus, we find even some stones in a manner vegetable, and plants after a sort sensible, and, as it were, animal; and some animals among the brutes approaching very nearly to man himself, so extraordinary is their instinct, as to partake of reason; and among men, some are of those rare and incomparable endowments, as seem on the confines of Spirits. All of them participating of two natures, that above, and that beneath, taking hands, as it were. And thus does Man stand between Body and Spirit; Angels, between the souls and spirits of men, and some Being superior to their own nature, which is the God who created them.

As there are, then, bodies without spirits, so are there certain Spirits without bodies, which, though not seen by outward eyes, are yet sufficiently manifest by their effects; not like human souls, according to nature, but sometimes even contrary to it. Intellectual, pure, immaterial minds, who see and are not seen, hear and are not heard, feel, and are not perceived, rejoice, and are (haply) grieved with the sons of men, and in this come near our rational natures. They are not gene-

[1] Atque his quidem gradibus, a præstantissimus ad infima paulatim pervenit natura, ordineque descendit, Max. Tyr. Diss. 14; De Deo Soc.

rated, nor do they multiply, yet are innumerable. They die not, nor do they change, because their essence is indissipable, their substance incorporeal, as is evident by their penetrative faculty, endowed with wonderful strength, agility, knowledge, and vast experience. Great, yet not infinite; powerful, not omnipotent; intelligent, not omniscient; nor know they God's decrees, nor future contingencies, no, nor the thoughts of our hearts, nor of one another, farther than what is revealed; nor, though exceedingly glorious, (I speak of the good angels, for there are also bad angels, who have lost some of these privileges) yet not so pure and transcendently bright, but that they veil their faces at His presence, whose eyes are ten thousand times brighter than the meridian sun.

That they discourse with one another is no doubt: how they do it, school-men are not agreed. The Apostle speaks of the tongue of angels,[1] and in his rapt,[2] that he heard things unutterable. They sang glory to God, and on earth peace, good-will, towards men, at our Saviour's birth. But by what organs, or intuition, rather, they converse, is too subtle for us to find: though that they *do* discourse, none, I think, do question. For had they not some way to understand one another, they should not have those perfections which are suitable to their natures. That they see and know all things in God, is but conjecture, nor is it much material to our subject; whilst the curious may

[1] I. Cor., xiii., 1. [2] II. Cor., xii., 4.

consult the learned, who have largely handled this difficulty.[1]

We have mentioned the probable opinion of intermediate substances, not as anything new, or of Divine revelation; but as comparing superior with inferior things in mutual concatenation. Nor has this been unthought of by not only Plato and his followers, but asserted by divers learned among the Christian writers.[2] The Prince of the Peripatetics, Aristotle, speaks[3] plainly of their several natures. But, as we are taught in Christian philosophy, the angels, having been educed out of nothing, are reducible to it again by the power which raised them, though, doubtless, that power shall never be put into act. In the mean time, and once for all, whenever we call God a Spirit, it is to signify by that name that He is no body, magnitude, or matter, but the Omnipotent Creator of both body and spirit, to do with them as He pleases, who is of a nature inconceivably above all beings—a pure and simple act. And therefore angels, though spirits, are from that, and have many other defects, so infinitely short of the nature and essence of God, that albeit, in respect of man, they

[1] Consult Aquinas; Prosper Epist. ad Demet.; and of the Fathers, Ambrose, Theodoret, Chrys., Hom. 22, &c.

[2] M. Felix, Tertullian, Lactantius, &c.

[3] As, firstly, things invisible, viz., intelligences, of the upper rank. Secondly, things visible, viz., all the furniture of the aspectable world. Thirdly, substances participating of both: certain incorporeal existences, perdurable and impassive principles, as to common mortality.

are truly spirits, in comparison of God, they may be said to be but bodies.

Whether these glorious creatures, refined as they are, are totally devoid of matter, has been so great a question, that Origen will have nothing to exist without it, save God alone; and yet affirms not that angels are bodies, but *in body;* nor does the great St. Augustine speak much otherwise, not to say Tertullian, who had so slender comprehension, how anything could be altogether incorporeal, as hardly to exempt the Deity itself. They generally held that, at the Resurrection, the Saints should be qualified *as the bodies of angels*, whilst the Sadducees would not admit of any substance between the Deity and sensible matter;[1] and by consequence that none of the Prophets and holy men were divinely inspired, accounting their writings merely the productions of human wisdom.

II. OF THEIR NAME.[2]

Of the name, dignity, office, and abode, something yet remains, as well as of their creation; which most divines have assigned to the fourth day's work; making them coevous with the eldest daughter of the Almighty *fiat*, Light, when all the sons of God shouted for joy, and the morning stars sung their Creator's hymn. Others deduce it (not improbably) some time before even the

[1] Thus Origen is said to have made the Deity corporeal, with the *Anthropomorphites;* but it was a calumny, and is refuted in his book περὶ ἀρχῶν, and in the eight *contra Celsum.*

[2] See Aug. de Civ. Dei, lib. xi., c. 9; Psalm civ., 4; Col., i., 16.

Genesis of the world; but of this, opinions are so various, that to recite them would be tedious.

The *name*, seldom or rarely used in Heathen authors till they conversed with Christians, includes its office, and has in sacred writings several acceptations; sometimes for created, sometimes for uncreated beings, especially in the Old Testament, where we have not only the son of God, but the whole Trinity [1] entertained as angels; not to speak of such [2] as have been sent to preach the Word of God, but of those who (as their names implied) have been despatched immediately from Heaven upon errands of high importance; such as appeared to David, Daniel, the Blessed Virgin, St. Peter, and other holy persons, commonly in the shape of young and beautiful men; seldom or never in hideous and brutish forms. For we speak not here of devils, who, though spirits of darkness, do often change themselves into angels of light, by God's permission.

Of their nature, we have already spoken, where we have showed them to be intuitive spirits, immaterial, profoundly knowing, powerful, and immortal, as void of all physical composition. The name and notion of *intelligences* we have from Aristotle; Daimones from their deep intuition, at least of natural things and their effects. In a word, (says Minutius) *Poetæ* [3] *sciunt phi-*

[1] Conf. Heb., xiii., 2; Gen., xviii., 3; xix., 2.

[2] As the angels and bishops of the churches, Rev., i., 20.

[3] "Poets pretend to know, philosophers disagree, Socrates knew personally, and either shunned or sought things, at the beck and will of a Daimon constantly attending him."

losophi differunt, Socrates novit, qui ad nutum et arbitrium assidentis sibi dæmonis, vel declinabat negotia, vel petebat. Whilst every man was thought to have his tutelar, his good or bad angel: Hermes, of old, Lactantius,[1] and others, asserting the protection of one good spirit to the good, and that in no wise did an evil spirit attend the good man; and that it was a good spirit which so constantly accompanied Socrates, as in our times Cardan, and haply friend Boyle.[2]

III. DIGNITY.

Touching the *rank* and *dignity* of this bright hierarchy, Dionysius makes THREE classes, and to every one as many. 1. Cherubim, seraphim, thrones; 2. Dominations, powers, virtues; 3. Principalities, archangels, angels. But of these, since none are certain from an uncertain and suspected author, we may suspend our belief, whilst we find not above four reckoned by the apostle;"[3] and whether they signified different orders, St. Augustine[4] confesses himself to be ignorant. In the mean time, those of the seven first the Rabbins have named Oculos Dei, the eyes of God, from their extraordinary sagacity;[5] and we argue a distinction

[1] Lact. de Orig. Error.

[2] For what the ancients held on this, the curious may consult Hierocles, Max. Tyr., Proclus, Plotinus, Platonists, &c.

[3] Col. i., 16; Eph., i., 21.

[4] S. Aug. in Enchir: "Fateor me ista ignorare."

[5] Conf. Gen. iii., 24: Isaiah, vi., 2; 1 Thess., iv., 16; Rom., viii., 38; I. Cor., xv., 40.

from that expression, "*above all principality*,"[1] &c., taken, doubtless, from the names of dignities of the Persian empire, accommodated to their degrees.

IV. ABODE.

As to their abode, being spirits, it is uncircumscribed. Philo places not only Evil, but the Blessed Spirits, among the elements. There are, says he, in the *aër* an holy company of unbodied souls, called angels, not confined to any definite place, filling sometimes a larger, sometimes a lesser space; nothing remaining empty which God has made. And some of these they will have of a fiery, others of aerial substance; and have, accordingly the names of cherubim, seraphim, &c., fitted to their ministry of governing orbs, constellations, elements, kingdoms, plants, animals, especially man, by those θεοῦ παιδίας καὶ φίλους, the sons and friends of God, as Maximus Tyrius calls them. They attributed the fierce and fiery nature to the archangel Michael; to Gabriel the watery, as the more gentle and benign. That the first flies with but one wing, slowly, the other with both, to note God's unwillingness to punish, and readiness to pardon. These are rabbinical fancies: whilst the Gnostics held that most diseases were infernal spirits, and only curable by charms, and incantations, and downright blows; for so, we are told,[2] Apollonius Thyanæus caused a miserable old beggar to be stoned to death, at Ephesus, persuaded by that impudent impostor that the poor creature was the demon who

[1] Eph., i., 21. [2] Philod. Vit. Apoll.

scattered the plague about that famous city, then infected with it. Indeed, two learned physicians, Sennertus and Fernelius,[1] believed they acted on human bodies, especially in lunacies, agues, and the falling sickness, and that they might be of different species, according to their operations and assignments; some appointed to protect, others to chastise. For it was not from the Jews only that every man had his guardian, as we showed the universal belief. And we have it from our Blessed Lord,[2] that even children had them, too. Satan could apply a text of Scripture to the same sense, though with malicious purpose, when he would have had our Saviour precipitate Himself from a pinnacle of the Temple, upon that presumption.

V. OFFICE.

Doubtless, their *office* is to stand before the throne, singing *Tris-hagion* — Thrice-Holy — to their glorious Maker, Head, and Establisher, the Holy Jesus. So to execute His commands, they pitch their tents about us; they are a wall of fire around us; they ascend and descend continually for us, either to carry up our prayers to God, or bring down blessings from Him; and with unseen but efficacious help defend us from innumerable mischiefs. By these was Hagar comforted, Abraham directed, Isaac saved from sacrifice, Jacob conducted.

[1] [Daniel Sennertus introduced the study of chemistry into the university of Wittenberg, (A.D. 1598) held that the souls of brutes were not material. —John Fernelius, Physician to Henry II., King of France, born towards the close of the fifteenth century.]

[2] St. Matt., xviii., 10.

By these was Lot rescued from the conflagration of filthy Sodom; by these were the children of Israel delivered out of Egypt; Elias protected; Sennacherib's mighty host slain. By these He protects whole empires, withstands false prophets, guards our persons, delivers out of prisons. They repel the rage of fire; they shut the mouths of lions; warn us of dangers; guide us in our ways; are witnesses of our actions; contribute to and rejoice at our conversion; and do us a thousand good offices. What shall I say more, O, Blessed Spirits! For the time would fail to mention and to celebrate the services we receive from you, who desert us not in perils, nor forsake us in death itself, transferring our souls into Abraham's bosom. Happy, thrice happy spirits, ambassadors of the happiest message that was ever brought from Heaven to earth, "Glory to God on high, on earth peace, good will towards men;" when ye came with those blessed tidings, "Behold a Virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call his name *Emmanuel;*" which, being interpreted, is, God with us; and if God be with us, who can be against us? or if any be, who can hurt us?

Hail, then, all hail, ye glorious beings, angels of light and bliss, who, persisting in your original perfection and unstained loyalty, have been ever faithful to your King; who, always beholding His resplendent face, delight to do His will; who, wrestling with us for blessings, suffer yourselves to be overcome;[1] who descending

[1] See Gen., xix., 16—xxxii. 1; Ps. xci., 11, 12; S. Luke, xvi., 22—xv., 7; Heb., i., 14; S. John, v., 4.

into the troubled waters, render them salutary, and make all our affections conformable. With infinite satisfaction do you behold us poor creatures strive to imitate your obedience, and, for the love ye bear to the honour of our common Creator, cheerfully submit to the meanest charge, taking even little children into your protection. Celestial courtiers, Divine heralds, how are we obliged to you! You annunciated that sweet name; you ministered to the fainting Saviour in the Wilderness; you comforted the agonizing Jesus in the garden; you proclaimed the Resurrection; you carry our souls into rest, and shall, at the Last Day, gather our scattered dust from the four corners of the earth;[1] when the trumpet shall sound, and the graves shall open, and the dead arise, and the voice of the Archangel shall be heard to sing "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, Heaven and earth are full of the majesty of thy glory! To Thee all angels cry aloud, the heavens, and all the powers therein: to Thee cherubim and seraphim continually do cry," and we Thy poor creatures with them, under their feet. They to praise and glorify Thee for Thy glory and benefits: we to adore and pray unto Thee for ourselves, that we, their fellow-servants, may be happy with them, behold the fair beauty of the Lord, and worship in His Holy Temple. They are present, says St. Bernard, *non modò tecum sed etiam pro te*, not only with Thee, but for Thee; delegated and sent forth to take care of such as shall be heirs of salvation; intimated by

[1] I. Thess., iv., 14-16; Ps. cxlviii., 2.

their ascending and descending on Jacob's ladder, to denote the continual Providence of God.

But what the Almighty's especial vigilance is over the greater societies of men, kingdoms, and commonwealths, yea, and over whole nature, rolling the wheels of their destiny, see (amongst others) Clemens, Alexandrinus, Tertullian,[1] and Origen.[2] In short, so constantly were they employed, that the ancient Jews affirmed that God never spake to mortals (Moses only excepted) but by the voice of angels. Not that God employs these powerful ministers, as if the government of the world were a molestation, or any drudgery to His omnipotent and omnipresent nature; but for the glory of His majesty, and to communicate to His creatures of His goodness and bounty, by intermediate beings, who continually behold His face, contemplate and adore those perfections, which he diffuses on us by them.

Not to multiply beings, therefore; that there are such beings and spirits we nothing doubt, seeing none of those other beings among the creatures are able to effect any thing of great and illustrious, but what concerns the body and the preservation of themselves. They know not many things belonging to their own interior functions, involuntary actions, and the like, (I speak here of man, the nearest in knowledge and perfection to angels) much less can they command the elements, inflict diseases, change the seasons, and by unseen hands protect their friends, or shield themselves

[1] Tertull. de Baptis. [2] Orig. Hom., 82, in Gen.

from a thousand accidents. Nothing but some supreme virtue, above all matter, and of a higher orb, could do any thing of this; though, when all is done, they can do no more than is given them from some being superior even to them, who in respect to Him are as nothing. Something or other is deficient in all beings to make them perfect: therefore, there is a being above them, consummate, and wanting nothing. All numbers commence at one—all effects proceed from One, who is the prime and first cause, the spring and fountain of all other subordinate causes and effects, and has therefore right to command and govern all, both angels and men.

But, further, as to the *natures* of these immortal spirits. The angels were all, at first, created good; but some there were who persisted not in their original state. So as all of them had need of grace to preserve them from defection; and this they had, not from their *nature*, which we see was lapsable, but from the grace and favour of God, who, foreseeing their perseverance, elected them in Christ,[1] whom he constituted to be the head and mediator, both of angels and men: and by whom they are now confirmed, so as never to fall from this grace, or lose their innocence. Before, it was possible they might have done this, having nothing to compel their will, which was free and unconstrained. I know there are who dispute this, as if this confirmation of their liberty to persist in goodness were a diminution of it; that the angels merited this happiness. But this

[1] Coloss., i., 16-20.

reward preceding their obedience, takes off all objections.[1]

Of these, that is some (from among the whole host of immaterial spirits) persisting not in their original perfection, but abusing their excellent faculties, were cast down from their lofty habitations. But upon what occasion, is not so clearly manifest, nor is it absolutely necessary we should know. Some think it was for malice, that God should exalt the nature of man in Christ above them; but their lapse being before that of man, this could not be it. Others, that they sinned against the Holy Ghost; others for disobedience to some certain law peculiar to them, and the like:[2] while the Scriptures seem rather to show us it was their pride and ambition,[3] whether in thought, or act, or both, arrogantly affecting the throne of the Most Highest. Nor was this conspiracy of a few, but of innumerable, who enjoyed, perhaps, their happy state long before this apostacy; nay, and might persist in a course of disobedience and impiety.

For, indeed, the lapsed angels could not be tempted to evil by any above themselves, and therefore was their deflection merely from themselves. It is likely they beheld their natures to be so glorious, so powerful, sublime, knowing, and perfect, that, priding themselves in their own accomplishments and combined strength, they would now no longer depend on their Creator, but envying His omnipotence, made some effort to de-

[1] Thom. Scotus. [2] Gen., iii., 5; S. Matt., iv., 9.
[3] I. Tim., iii., 6. See St. Aug. de Civ. Dei, lib. xi., c. 14.

throne the Almighty. For this ingratitude they were precipitated into the burning lake,[1] confined to their dismal prisons, and bound in chains of darkness.[2] And that these were not a few, nor of the inferior ranks, we conjecture from the various names of them we find in Scripture: *Beelzebub*, their Prince, Satan, the Devil, the accuser of the brethren, Prince of the World, gods and princes of the age; the Roaring Lion; the Great Dragon, the Serpent, Abaddon, Apollyon, Murderer from the beginning, &c. Of another class are the Demons, Rulers of Darkness, spirits of wickedness, the Tempter, all of them names expressing their nature and monstrous pravity. And as the corruption of the best is always the worst, so these, from the most pure, pious, and excellent, became the most unclean, impious, and execrably wicked. The Manicheans, indeed, held that some angels were created evil, and some of the schoolmen, that they fell of necessity, from that text before quoted, which says that the devil was a murderer from the beginning;[3] but which by no means signifies to that sense, but to the beginning of man's being in the world, not to the creation of angels. Their not standing in their integrity plainly intimating that they were once in it, and stood unshaken for a time. But, though they lost their happy station, and many other perfections, yet did they not their essence, power, and natural faculties altogether; that they might be God's executioners, to revenge himself upon the wickedness of men,

[1] S. Luke, x., 18; II. Pet., ii., 4. [2] S. Jude, 6.
[3] St. John, viii., 44.

who follow their example, and for trial of good men, who resist the devil's temptations, and live uprightly.

In the mean time, this power of theirs, though very great in the inferior world, where they are sometimes permitted to range and roar about, is so limited, that they cannot so much as enter into a herd of swine, nor create the most despicable vermin, without the express permission of Almighty God, much less do mischief to any man, without His leave.[1] *A se ipso*, says Gregory, *libidinem nocendi habet, sed à Domino potestatem.*[2] The miracles which he seems to do, are lying ones, *wonders*, not true miracles. He may effect some things besides the order of some particular nature, through his great experience and knowledge of actives and passives, but nothing besides the order of universal nature, established in the Creation. He has, indeed, craft to seduce; is the father of lies and calumnies; exerts his malice, and seeks, with all his might, to bring men into the same condemnation; and, since he cannot invade the throne of God, levels all his spite against his creatures, and would confound the whole Creation at once, were it in his power.[3] And, therefore, that he may provoke God against mankind, he sets upon us with all his arts and stratagems, injecting the horridest suggestions, blinding men's eyes, enkindling lusts, provoking to wrath, murders, theft, and all manner of abominations leading to

[1] Job., 1.

[2] "Of himself he hath the desire to harm us, but from God the power."

[3] Rev., xii., 9.

perdition. Being themselves without hope, they would drive all others to despair, employing all their force and serpentine craft, by temptations to pride, ambition, revenge and hypocrisy, sins which cast themselves out of heaven, deceiving the world with their impudent oracles, false prophets, impostures, and abominable idolatry. He exerts his devilish power by sometimes inflicting diseases, poisoning the air, raising tempests, subverting and submerging houses, cities, and whole countries—blasting the fruits and product of the earth; and sometimes, again, for his ends, may, perhaps, by his magic spells, and to create an opinion in men of his power and virtue, prescribe a healing medicine, direct to hidden treasure, or take it from another man, to enrich his worshipper; nay, tell some truths, not for truth's sake, but to gain himself credit, when he tells a lie.[1] For so he can change himself into the shape of an angel of light, exquisitely qualified to do mischief either way; nor this in vain, from the fruit of his first fatal and crafty suggestions, ruining (as far as in him lay) the whole race of mankind, and having been the author of all those evils and calamities the world has groaned under ever since.

The effects of these insinuations have created an opinion in some men, that the nature of these spirits is not altogether immaterial, but that there are an inferior sort, who, though they lived many ages, did in tract of time decay and cease. Famous, we know, is the story of the dead Pan, about the time of the silence of the

[1] II. Cor., xi., 14.

Delphic oracle:[1] and some from that text in Jude, mentioning the "first estate" which the angels lost, fancy that with it they also lost their celestial natures, as well as habitations; and becoming more incrassated, were thereby passible, obnoxious to a kind of dissolution, and penetrable by that fire prepared for the devil and his angels. Thus being between mortal and immortal, they held that they enticed men, stirring up the humours of the body, the irascible and concupiscible appetites, to pervert their morals; the vices of the mind following the constitution of the body, where grace and the special goodness of God does not prevent it.

We have showed how they seduced the world by their pretended oracles, uttering voices and dark responses, by their enthusiast priestesses and Tripods; sometimes by the entrails of animals, the flight of birds, &c. These were the lemures, satyrs, elfs, lares, nymphs, the manes and inferiæ of the seduced Pagan world, and who were to be appeased by bloody and beastly sacrifices. Such the *Empusæ*,[2] that of old appeared at

[1] [Plutarch relates this story (Περὶ τῶν ἐκλελοιπότων χρηστ). The substance of it is as follows: An Egyptian pilot, passing the Echinades Islands, was hailed by a voice from the shore, bidding him announce the death of the mighty Pan, at Palodes: and on his uttering the words, as commanded, a prodigious groaning was heard. Demetrius also states that the inhabitants of one of the small islands off Britain told him (about the same time) that great commotion of the elements, pestilence, &c., was occasioned by the death of mighty spirits, whose existence, like a burning lamp, gave no annoyance, but their extinction much.]

[2] Ἔμπουσα, a horrible spectre, that changes its shape every moment. See Aristoph. Ranæ., 290.

funeral obsequies, as Suidas mentions; their hellish pranks attested by innumerable instances out of profane histories of undoubted credit. Of this sort might be the spectre at the Rubicon, Cæsar hesitating that trajection; and also what appeared to Brutus the night before his being slain, with other prestigious feats of sorcerers in all ages, assisted, as those deluded creatures are, by those accursed spirits' insight into the secrets and power of matter and natural things; which they abuse in contempt of God, striving to erect a kingdom here, and affecting to be served as gods on earth, who have been cast from Heaven. Desperate and hardened are they against all that is good, nor capable of repentance, because (as we have said) they had full liberty to have stood, vast experience to have known, and, in their intuition, had all that was to happen before their eyes; whereas, man, whom they maliciously drew into the crime, knew only by degrees, is frail by nature, nor of so peremptory and determined will.

These are the spirits Euripides,[1] (from what tradition is obscure) calls οὐρανοπετεῖς, that fell from Heaven; and which Pherecydes, the Syrian, names a generation of serpents. Verily, Trismegistus and Hierocles speak extremely to the sense of Holy Scripture about the lapse of man. Nor is it to be slighted what we read of the Persians, observing an anniversary holy-day, to

[1] [Empedocles? Plutarch, speaking of the restlessness of debtors, says — πλάζονται καθάπερ οἱ οὐρανοπετεῖς τοῦ Ἐμπεδοκλέους δαίμονες —"they roam about like those spirits of Empedocles, *fallen from Heaven*."]

humble and afflict themselves for the death and destruction of vice; wherein the remarkable ceremony was the killing of serpents, in which figure, it seems, the devil had frequently appeared amongst them. And at this present time, most of the idols and prodigious statues of both the Indian and Chinese temples are represented in the shapes of dreadful serpents and winged dragons.

Now, though we never read of any good angel putting on the shape of beast, or other deformed creature, yet God Almighty Himself (the Second Person in the Sacred Trinity) did sometimes honour angels and angelic men (those lineaments of Deity, as some have styled it) in human forms, and as such were worshipped by Abraham, Jacob, Manoah, Gideon, David, and others, before the Incarnation. But when the nature of man was indeed exalted in CHRIST, who was constituted the Lord of Angels, they then became our fellow-servants, and we are forbid their adoration.[1]

Now, in whatever dismal recesses these unhappy spirits properly dwell, we know it is no longer in Heaven. Doubtless, in some caliginous receptacles, detained in chains of darkness, though sometimes loosed, under perpetual check. Some will have them banished into the northern mists and foggy regions of either pole, from that expression in St. Peter:[2] others condemn them to the centre of the earth, and, if not there, to the vortices and prisons of Hell itself, near its confines, expecting with trembling their last and dreadful doom. Whilst

[1] Col., ii., 18. [2] II. Pet., ii., 4.

the Scripture styles them Princes of the Air, to be perhaps hereafter totally deprived of light, when the sun shall be darkened, and time shall be no more. In a word, somewhere without that Divine influence, that joy and light they once possessed. For where God's presence is not, there is Hell, and consummate misery.

We have shown how the good angels encamp about us, and that their office is to protect his creatures. Origen supposes that God acts to the interior disposition of man, and forms His decrees as He foresees he will use the freedom of his will. To such a one, (says he) namely, to one who resolves constantly to proceed in the paths of virtue, He sends a guardian angel to co-operate and be always with him; and to one who yet lives better He appoints an angel of a superior order, for his attendant; but takes away this aid from those who, having begun to live a holy life, fall back from their integrity.

What the number of angels may be is uncertain.[1] But that there are many, nay, multitudes, is indisputable. They encamped about Jacob,[2] and were a fiery army against the Syrians.[3] Daniel saw thousand thousands ministering before the ancient of days.[4] And as their number is great, so neither is less their power. Consider we but what they did, not only in the camps we spake of, but the mortal slaughter of the Egyptian First-born,[5] the seventy thousand slain for David's

[1] See Euseb. Præp. Evang., lib. vii., c. 4. [2] Gen., xxxii., 2.
[3] 2 Kings, vii., 6—xix., 35. [4] Dan., vii., 11.
[5] Exod., xii., 29.

pride.[1] But though the evil angels are thus strong, and so malicious — though the devil be come down, having great indignation, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time, and therefore denounces perpetual hostility to the seed of the woman which bruised his head—yet is there a power above him, at the thought of whom the devils tremble,[2] and to whose iron sceptre they all submit; so that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers,[3] nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to hurt those who flee to God for succour, who has promised not to suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but will also with the temptation make a way to escape.[4] And if evil angels beset us, the angels of the Lord encompass round about them that fear Him, and deliver them. For the chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels; and more are they who are for us than those who are against us.

The use we are, then, to make of this, will lead us to the contemplation of that Infinite Being, whose ministering spirits these angels are. Secondly, that since such glorious and mighty spirits fell, we take not only heed to our footsteps, but praise our gracious Maker, who, when we fall, lifts us up again, so we fall not presumptuously and finally. Thirdly, that since they protect and serve us with such readiness, who are so much

[1] Sam., xxiv. [2] S. James, ii., 19.
[3] Col., ii., 15; Rom., viii., 38, 39; Heb., ii., viii.
[4] I. Cor., x., 13.

inferior to them, we as cheerfully serve and assist one another. Lastly, that, considering the malice of Satan, our own frailty, the presence of so great a God, who spies out all our thoughts, as well as actions, instead of rejoicing the holy angels at our conversion, we grieve them not by our perversion; which that we may always remember, let us take the advice of a holy person,[1] *In omni loco, in omni angulo, reverentiam exhibe tuo angelo; neque ille præsente facias, quod me præsente erubesces.*[2] Revere thyself, and put on the παναπλίαν, the whole armour of the Apostle, that we may be able to resist, yea, and overcome him. He flies at all, nor spared he our Blessed Lord. Nor is it sin to be tempted, but not to resist it, is the fault. To suffer temptation is indeed a misery; but to set upon its mortification, an occasion of virtue. In a word, not to be tempted happens to none alive. Freedom from temptation has in it more safety, but less honour, if we resist, and from such he flies.[3]

SECTION III. OF THE INTELLECTUAL SOUL.

We have already spoken so copiously on this subject, that the soul and thinking part of man is not contradistinct, but absolutely diverse, from that of other animals,

[1] S. Bernard.

[2] "In every place, in every corner, show reverence to thy angel, and do nothing in his presence, that would shame you in mine."

[3] He that would see more concerning angels, their Establishment and Fall, may read the 11th and 12th books of St. Aug. De Civ. Dei.

or material principles, and that there is such a peculiar substance belonging to man alone, that we shall not need farther to enlarge upon it, than briefly to set down what does chiefly occur concerning its original and production, with a short repetition of some arguments formerly touched.

A learned Father[1] was of opinion, that all the souls which were ever put into bodies were created at once and altogether from the beginning, and ever since reserved in store by God, to be from time to time (in their turns) infused into them, as man's production and successive matter require.

The Egyptians, and from them Pythagoras, held that, there being only such a definite number of souls created, they transmigrated into other bodies of men, or other animals, when any body died.

A third sort would have the soul of man (as of other living creatures) to be propagated by the seminal traduction of the natural parents successively, from the first person and womb that ever conceived: this virtue, nevertheless, to be first *ex nihilo* created and infused. And lastly, (with St. Augustine) others, especially the modern divines, that this intellectual particle was not only so created, and infused in our first parents, and so transmitted, but by an every-day's, yea, every moment's new creation and infusion, was immediately, divinely, and miraculously poured into each individual conception, which came to life and animal motion.

Indeed, the two first of these have been generally

[1] Origen.

exploded, and therefore deserve not to be insisted upon; the two latter warmly controverted, and, for aught I can perceive, with no unequal probability. In the mean time, that man consisted of three parts, or principles,[1] *spirit, soul,* and body, St. Paul has somewhere not obscurely intimated; or, as Plotinus, νοῦς, the *mind* only was attributed to man, as immediately infused—as created *de novo* and *ex nihilo,* upon every quickened conception; or, as others taught, seminally traduced by the parents; whilst the two other were common to us and brutes. Nor doubt we but that body is the product of body, together with the animal soul and life, consisting of a subtile, ethereal spirit, or *flammula,* whose centre is the heart and vehicle the blood; dispersed through the whole body by innumerable passages, to give it life and motion, and which, through its exceeding volatility, as it exhausts itself, is continually supplied and repaired again by constant aliment, elaborated in proper vessels and divers circulations; whereby the animal life is maintained, (as the flame of a lamp by the supplies of oil) and all the faculties belonging to a sensitive creature kept in motion. But this by the way; for it is not here we intend to dilate upon the mere animal life, but that intellectual principle which does, somewhere or other, reside in man alone.

That it is diffused, and takes up the entire body, has been the wrangle and altercation of those who have confounded all the world with their inextricable jargon

[1] 1 Thess., v., 23; Genes., ii., 7; Eccles., xii., 7; Job, xxxi., 15—xxxiii., 4; Isai., xxix., 24; Zech., xii., 1; Acts, xvii., 25.

and definitions. If, indeed, we did judge and reason at the extremities of our fingers or toes, or, that any other remote and external member being cut off, the intellect were prejudiced, there were some appearance for the assertion: but, so long as the more noble organs remain untouched, it proves otherwise. Why, then, should it be rather assigned to the sensible and *tactile* faculty, where the understanding does not at all exert itself, than where it so conspicuously does, and from whence it universally irradiates all the rest, namely, from the head? Nor yet, as confined, but as the Sun in the Firmament;[1] not, I say, *in loco*, but *habitudine*, as logicians speak; nor as in brutes, co-extended with the body, so as but part in a part, the whole in the whole, but as impartible—all in every part—filling the receptacle, yet taking up no place of it; nor as co-augmenting with the growth of the body, only beginning there to be, where before she was not, and ceasing to be where she lately was. So that, of all created beings, she alone is the most resplendent mirror, image, and epitome of her Creator, since, as God, she is invisible; as God, a spirit, though not such a spirit: she fills the body, or microcosm, as He the universe; neither occupying place, nor being comprehended by place, whilst she is yet All in every place. And thus, when a new creature is produced, then God begins to be; yet without local motion to facilitate his admission: and when that ceases to be, God neither ceases, nor is diminished, but only ceases to be there, without change of place.

[1] See Lactant. De Opif. Dei, cap. 16.

In these, indeed, God and the intellectual soul seem to agree, but in Him with infinite more eminency, since the Almighty governs and disposes of the Soul, as the Soul does of the Body; which yet she cannot do, were she not the form which denominates the man, whilst God is not made the soul or form of anything He produces; or as if of Him, and all that He has made, any third substance should emerge, who is the Universal All, Omnipotent, Intellectual, moderating, disposing, and moving all, without being moved at all. And, whilst the human Soul is properly but in the living and animate organs, God is all in all things absolutely, and that not in bodies alone, but in spirits. Nor does any thing exclude Him: for where He is not, nothing can be. The Soul is, then, so in the body, as she serves herself of the body, to perform her functions; whilst virtually, essentially, and communicatively, she is in the whole and in every part, but more eminently in the superior part, as is evident from the notorious interruption of her intellectual operations, when the head or brain is vitiated: not that the Workman has lost skill, but because his tools and instruments are broken or dull, he cannot use them to any effect: nor that the Soul were subject to the head or brain alone, or to any other particular residence; but for the reasons produced. Their assigning its *place* to be the *pineal glandule* is nothing but a conjecture, because anatomists know not perhaps what other use to put it to, since the same is found in the head of beasts as well as in man's.

The human soul is, therefore, a substance altogether

independent of the body, or any part of it; and consequently, as a spirit, needs no such organ for its domicile. Though she makes use of all, she dwells in none, but as she adoperates and serves herself of the body and its more eminent parts,[1] where the reason and intellectual powers are, as it were, set on a watch-tower, from whence she speculates, sends out her parties and emissary senses, to discover and make report of what they find; in a word, all forms and motions, upon whose relations she proceeds to judge and determine freely; which, if more apparently from the head, is by reason of its being the principal mansion, where the sensible species and ideas make their deepest impressions: not after the manner of corporeal impulses, (a certain recognition of the impulse) but rather a spiritual intuition, the Soul herself moving and perceiving, and not the body properly, which is all this while but a dead piece of organized matter, and no more; tuned, indeed, and fitted with strings, but making no harmony without this skilful artist. The Soul exercises, indeed, her functions more conspicuously in the head; and it is also for its structure and eminence the more adapted instrument, nay, the *Basilick*, where the Great Creator seems chiefly to have seated her, and from which the intellectual operations issue and discover their effects. For, though we perceive and feel our other parts affected by the several passions, still the perturbation sensibly proceeds from the head, where the fancy and will follow the dictates of the practical intellect.

[1] 1. ἐπ' ἄκρῳτῷ σώματι.

Now, since everything in Nature requires place, and a dwelling to reside in, and that spirits, and (as we have showed) even angels, both immaterial, cannot move beyond the universal body of matter, which is doubtless their place—this Soul of ours, one would think, should not be destitute of some figure and dimension, too. But of this we have no measures. Its nature and excellencies so transcend our deepest inquiry as to this particular, that we quite lose ourselves, and our conceptions vanish into figures and analogies, when we would describe it. It is enough we are assured that, whilst the Soul comprehends the Body, she herself is incomprehensible. Wherefore, though we assign her place, and cannot but believe her moveable too in time, we prescribe no limits, set her no bounds, nor can we effigiate or draw the profile. He, He only, who formed her, can describe her, and to Him we submissively resign this impervestigable research: so true is that of an excellent poet:[1]—

———Divinum est opus
Animam creare, proximum huic ostendere.

Nor with less difficulty shall we be able so much as to conceive the manner of the Soul's act of understanding—that an incorporeal substance should produce a corporeal intellect, or, *vice versâ*, how from corporeal ideas there should result incorporeal perception; un-

[1] [Dr. Bathurst, a friend of the Author's, Dean of Wells, and President of Trin. Coll., Oxford. See his "Life and Literary Remains," by Thomas Warton.]

less, with some of the Fathers, we allowed her to be of such a contexture as were indissoluble, without being totally incorporeal; at least, of some middle nature, apt to connect the animal soul without local mixture; like the union of steel and magnet: I say, to conceive how she should act without some such concession, is hard. For, though the soul may possibly exist without corporeal organs, and perform some actions of life, yet, being so adjusted to the body as she is, though she may comprehend and contemplate intellectual notions and reflect upon herself—nay, as a kind of Hypostatic self-existent *Ens*, or being, subsist, as she acts in sleep (which is the image of death)—how she should locally move, see, and hear, and exercise other senses, without the instruments of those senses, increases the admiration. That the soul was not, therefore, of altogether so metaphysical a nature, was the opinion of many great and holy men, besides philosophers; for such were S. Athanasius, Origen, Tertullian, Damascene, S. Basil, S. Jerome, and divers others; but intending, I suppose, the pure and simple essence of God, to which all other substances are but thick and gross, in comparison; and then, it was also to encounter the Gnostics and Manichees, Priscilianists, and other heretics, who held the human soul to be a part of the Deity itself, even as to its very substance, which is, we know, the only unconfined infinite and (*ab origine*) incommunicable Eternal Existence.

But to solve these difficulties, of communicating her operations so uncontrollably through such inactive mat-

ter as she daily passes, some have attempted to fix her delicate substance in the fancy, and her ideas, without any commerce with the lower functions; and so to speculate those ideas, as to produce other ideas and images more sublime, consonant to the acts of the understanding, the will remaining free. Indeed, this concession would solve a mighty difficulty, were it as intelligible as it is the contrary: or that they could tell us how to unite an unelementated substance with corporeal matter, how diluted and defecated soever, airy, or fiery; since still it is a mixture of things incompatible.

Wherefore, the Cartesians are resolved to admit of no substantial life anywhere, save in matter, making the intellectual and rational soul but a sublimer modification of it; and that men differ from brute animals only in the more curious organization, the use of speech, and the like; but do not in the least satisfy us how thought, which is altogether incorporeal, and often conversant with spirits, and metaphysical notions that have no manner of relation to matter, should be produced by it. If any life or thought may be thus factitious and generable, out of lifeless matter, so may everything else in nature; which to affirm, were both nonsense and Atheism.

Indeed, the material soul does likely give that motion and activity to the engine body by sensation from the external stroke—motion from the internal impulse of objects, as we have showed: but how it comes to perform not only such actions as are of custom and purely

necessary, but also to discern others more difficult and progressive, and notions never derived from our senses, does utterly exceed the capacity of matter, however modified or refined; namely, that life and sense, understanding and reason, should be merely local motion! Wherefore, both Aristotle and Anaxagoras, finding themselves at a loss about this mechanic fabric, (however fortunate the modern wits fancy themselves, and brag of what feats they can do with their puppet) were glad, it seems, to call in a *mental cause* to their aid; which is more than these gentlemen will allow and condescend to, after their *machine* has received its first impression of motion; whilst we have sufficiently made appear, that no body or magnitude could ever possibly move itself, but by the motion of some other agent: and therefore some other substance there is, which is not body: and to say that anything of this nature is effected by forms or qualities, is a mark of great stupidity.

Were the intellectual soul a material substance, sensible and material things would improve it, which it is plain they do not. Men can speculate with shut eyes, and that more profoundly; and all material faculties and conversation with sensual objects quite lose their energy by their vehemency, whilst the intellectual soul becomes more vigorous and enlarged, and can, and often does, resist corporeal pleasure; this she would not do, were she herself corporeal. She is the same in sickness as in health; nor does age impair her, because there are in her no repugnant principles.

We have abundantly showed that, though the human soul be lodged in human bodies, which receive life, animal motion, growth, and activity from the animal life, yet this life is not capable of excogitation, or of diverting and improving any act or science, how old by experience soever; nor can it deliberate, judge, and determine rationally of things above the possibility of sensual objects, common to us with brutes, who are only concerned about things present, and such as belong to the maintenance of the body, its nutriment, propagation, preservation, and pleasure. And, though amongst some of them there may be found certain offers and approaches to reason, as in horses, elephants, foxes, dogs, &c., yet they are but misty, obscure, and imperfect strictures of it, and are still the same, nor advance they farther than to instinct and repetition.

We have showed that, in all other creatures living, the sense and appetite govern the body; whereas, the soul of man governs both the body and its senses, and often contradicts and resists them both; and *that* sometimes even to death itself and cruel torments; and upon occasion rectifies the mistakes and hallucinations they are obnoxious to. So unlike are the sentiments of these two principles, the operations of the mind, and those of the body, that there is no proportion between them: for were their perfections any way propagable by nature, one wise man would always beget another wise man, which very seldom they do: Solomon begat a fool, and some fools have been the fathers of wise and illustrious persons. We have also made it evident, how

the intellectual Soul is conversant about things totally separate from sense and matter—speculates things invisible and abstracted—understands the nature of affections, of numbers, and mathematical figures—penetrates into causes and effects—and is capable of taking into its contemplation the whole aspectable world, passing in a moment from pole to pole, and diving into the profoundest abysses.

Brutes have sense, and memory, and fancy, in weak degrees, and are susceptible of divers passions and affections, as well as men; but comprehend nothing above matter, and what is immediately before them. They can be taught to imitate some particular things, but they know not why, nor what they do, much less have they any notions of religion, or the moral virtues, nor know they any thing of spiritual and infinite, because all material operations are confined and limited, and rise no higher than the spring of matter. Wherefore, the intellectual Soul is a substance so transcendently pure and sublime, as can proceed from none but God, who created it; but whether immediately produced, without any progenial traduction or radiation, as Tertullian, Apollinaris, and others hold, and many still assert, with no contemptible arguments, is, as we said, the dispute.

St. Augustine and his followers were for a perpetual creation and instantaneous ἐμψύχωσις, or *animation*, by way of infusion: whilst those of the school of Plato supplied it out of a pre-existent magazine, immortal and separate from body; fancying that the species of all things

in nature were concreated together with our souls, which, after their descent, (no more remembering what they did or where they passed their time before they came into bodies) learn and agitate here, by degrees, not as fresh and new notions never known before, but as things recovered by way of reminiscence and recollection, as the bodily organs grow more vigorous and capable.

It seems, by this conceit, as if some heinous guilt, contracted in a former state, were by *this* to be expiated; seeing, if in their new mansions and province they had governed wisely and better, they were in time to be delivered from their *Ergastulum*,[1] and restored to their pristine happiness. Nor was it only the opinion of the Platonists and Academics, Iamblicus, Plotinus, and their Disciples, but of the great Hermes, and even Aristotle himself; of the Pythagoreans, and many of the Jewish Rabbies: established on that of Wisdom,[2] "For I was a witty child, and had a good spirit. Yea, rather, being good, I came into a body defiled."[3] And thereupon they have condemned some to do their penance in despicable insects, as well as in the greater and more generous animals, nay, in trees and plants, exposed to wind and weather, and even reduced some of them to annihilation. Nor was it, I say, the notion of these

[1] "House of Correction."

[2] Wisd., viii., 19, 20.

[3] Eram puer bonam indolem sortitus, immò bonus cum essem, corpus contaminatum reperi. [Some editions of the vulgate read *incoinquinatum*, which is followed in the authorized version.]

alone, but of divers christians likewise, and amongst the Fathers, Origen,[1] against which St. Augustine somewhere declaims; and it sounds prettily indeed in allegory, and would better pass, did we not by daily experience find how unwilling this imprisoned soul of ours is to depart and leave its confinement, as punitive and miserable as they pretended it to be.

It is on this account, they tell us, how this noble and divine substance finds herself distressed, at her first descent into the body, through the weakness of infant organs; as under durance, chains, and weights, till, with the more mature and cultivated body, she arrives in time to be able to exert her power—recover herself—and, by illustrious notions, to discover whence she came, and whither she aspires, and what a glorious thing she was in her *quondam* state of separation; though now again assigned to an unhonourable or perhaps mean apartment, for probation and exercise of her virtue.

But, whilst we are describing these extravagancies, Maimonides, I remember, tells us of a sect that held the Soul, and all things else in nature, to be but only *accidents:* and that all our knowledge is in perpetual flux, and not the same to-day as it was yesterday, but that there is an eternal creation: and so a man must have ten thousand souls every moment, and for every motion and modality, whether he sits or walks, reads or performs any other action or motion, as so many accidents are souls created in the instruments perform-

[1] Origen, Περὶ ἀρχ., l. 3, c. 3 and 4, c. 4; S. Aug., Ep. 27.

ing them! But of these perhaps more than enough; whilst that of *traduction* (for being asserted by champions of no mean account, nor without support of equal argument) may deserve a paragraph in the chapter; especially since it is conceived it may be evinced without any pre-existence in the platonic notion, or the least violence to other truths, and solve its immortal and indivisive nature; nor stands in need of new fabrics and creations to attend every human conception. Nor is it (say they) cogent, when they reckon from the sacred text[1] that God did absolutely cease from all His works, to admit its only signifying His making greater worlds, and not these microcosm terrellas: or from that of S. John, "my Father worketh hitherto, and I work,"[2] if He be continually busied in new creations; when it may as naturally import His work of providence in blessing and supporting what He has made with His Father; and, what is more, the work of grace.

If, as it appears, and no Christian doubts, the Almighty breathed into man the breath of life, by which he became a living soul, what should hinder but the same celestial inflation should be as apt to kindle into millions, as the most actual flame first warms and then heats and inflames the nearest disposed matter, without any division or diminution whatsoever?[3] This allusion

[1] Gen. ii., 2. [2] S. John, v., 17.

[3] Integra lucerna, integra manet, licet altera de illâ accendatur.—*S. Augustine.*—"The light of a lamp remains entire and the same, though another be kindled from it."

of the Soul to flame and light having, as Plutarch thinks, so near a cognation to the Soul: and so the poet,

> Igneus est ollis vigor, et cælestis origo
> Seminibus.[1]

Sufficient, say they, was that blessing, "Increase and multiply," given and spoken by the great Creator to the first couple; not as a well-willer only, but as promoting and perfecting both the general and particular act and power of His concurrence, with procreation, to produce that potential being, the human Soul: and so God, secondarily to His original benediction, may be said to create or inform, but not *out of nothing*, (as in proper sense it signifies) which were wholly repugnant to His resting the seventh day, and to the positive sense of the text. For, when God created Nature, it was by a proper action and supernatural re-creation, educing out of a chaos (in which were latent principles and simple essences of all things) whatsoever he did create: and doubtless established all her seminal powers, to specify and produce all that she was ever to bring forth, so as never to stand in need of any more and immediate supplies: thereby illustrating His incomparable Wisdom and Providence, that, in so many thousand years as the world has been created, nothing should be defective, nothing desiderate, nothing impaired, nothing redundant or that needed any after better excogitation, or second thoughts, to render this universe more

[1] "Th' ethereal vigour is in all the same:
And every soul is filled with equal flame."
Dryden—Virg., vi., 730.

complete, or to carry on the succession of things to the end, with this work of propagation, not only as to the rest of animals in a life of sense, created before man, (and whose souls God is not said to have in-breathed) but to whole mankind, by a more peculiar and special Grace, in a life inspired with reason. Nay, how could man have multiplied in that manner, without this principle, since, without it, it had not been to multiply his own species, but a body only, without a Soul; and such as must have been free of all original taint? Besides, what necessity that all who derive her from the first spark set in motion by the Divine Breath [1] should stand more in need of a new creation, than for men (Prometheus-like) to fetch fire from Heaven by an extraordinary process and so many seeming absurdities, so long as it is flaming in every hearth?

I am very sensible how many great and worthy persons (by far superior in name and number) dispute against all this; and, therefore, only repeat their arguments, who tell us that their opponents might peradventure not look so far back, as was necessary to conclude so dogmatically for daily and instantaneous creations and infusions. Nor do they pretend as if any Soul, springing from traduction, should be less from God's immediate handy-work; and may therefore be called *creation*, seeing he had no assistant but the Holy Trinity; and so may still be said truly to give souls every moment, by His general blessing on propagation,

[1] Theodoret, Ambrose, Hilary, Hierome, Calvin, Beza, Bullinger, Ursinus.

from the first virgin soul infused into Adam; whom accordingly we find called by the Evangelist, *the Son of God*—the rest of mankind his progeny only.

As to those other Scripture arguments, a late revered Doctor,[1] amongst others, has showed that the Soul in Sacred Writ is used with so great variety of sense, as that little material can thence be fetched to the disadvantage of *traduction*—the very notion of the Soul's regeneration premising a generation. Nor can it (some think) be safely made out how that secret contagion of all the sons of Adam should be derived from the body only; since it were with Pelagius to deny the soul's being the subject not only of that, but of all other sin whatsoever,[2] as *accidens in subjecto*. They fancy it very difficult to conceive how this deadly spot should adhere so pertinaciously without some traditative emanation, seeing the body does not defile the Soul, but the will, fancy, and understanding, which are the rational faculties, and should govern all the rest.[3] Indeed, the senses intromit the objects of temptation, but it is the other who makes the choice, and determines them to act; and it is the *heart*[4] which is the source of our corruptions. For, how should pure and uncontaminate spirits, never before in being (without recurring to pre-existence, and charging the souls with former guilt) come thus polluted into bodies, nay, (and as some almost say) ere the

[1] Porter.

[2] S. Augustine, Epist., 157.

[3] Mens enim est profectò, quæ peccat.—*Lactantius.*

[4] S. Matt., xii., 34, 35; Ephes., iv., 18, 19, 20; Jam., i., 13, 14.

recipients had done good or evil, without injuring the infinitely Divine benignity, purity, and justice? Nay, how could Seth be procreated in the image of his father, (as all Divines agree) stained with the contamination derived from Adam, but through the leprosy of his Soul; which never signifies the entire person, and denominates the essential man? For, were it otherwise, the lapse were but personal, and would have determined in him: whilst pollution is only chargeable upon the Soul's account, whose vassal is the body, moved and directed by nerves, as by reins the rider does his horse.

To this they oppose the Soul of our blessed Lord; but I opine that it does not at all enter into these circumstances; and, besides, it is a secret reserved for another state, *when we shall know as we are known*, not as now, *in part*, but even this high mystery in all the comprehensions of an exalted nature: nor, in the mean time, is our ignorance reproachable. Excellent, therefore, is that advice of Tertullian (however in other matters not so consistent) *Præstat per Deum nescire, quia non revelaverit, quàm per hominem scire quia ipse præsumserit.*[1]

It is sufficient to believe, as to this, that the Holy Spirit sanctified the substance of the blessed Virgin, from whom Christ assumed His sacred person: and as it is not the Soul, but the concupiscent circumstances of procreation, that induce the fatal taint, our blessed Lord

[1] "It is better to be ignorant through God, because he hath not revealed, than to know through man, because he hath presumed." —Tertull. De Animâ, c. 1.

was not so produced: all was miracle; all was mysterious; all pure, divine, and supernatural; and "Who shall declare his generation?"—Even He alone who infused the Soul of the first Adam, and so might do of the second.

The only remaining difficulty of importance, then, seems to be, how but a single Soul should be produced, which, being by nature indissoluble, simple, and incapable of mixture, could receive no further perfection from conjunction. To this it is offered, that the Soul traduced is from the woman *only;* neither is it less the Soul of man, forasmuch as she was taken out of man: nor do we read of two different *inflations*, or that there were any other Souls created separate from her, but what she received from Adam; nor any other human body framed from the earth, save only his. Nor are they lastly, without as pious and learned suffragans, when amongst them we find Cyril, Apollinaris, the judicious and great Melancthon, Keckerman, Magirus, Horslius, &c.; and that the opinion was almost as universal as mankind through all the Western Churches, as St. Jerome himself acknowledges.[1] Nor is Tertullian to be slighted because the devout man fell into some errors afterwards; for, as much as the great St. Augustine himself does hesitate and did not care to deliver anything peremptorily against it; nay, ingenuously confesses that he knew not what to pronounce, which may serve one that should incline to it for

[1] Tertull. de Anim., c. 27, 40; Jerome Paulin., Epist., 2; St. Augustine, Epist., 28, 157, and Serm. de Orig. Anim.

apology; and that he also, as well as others, has been as much puzzled with his "*Creando infunditur et infundendo creatur*," &c.—whether created or infused by one inseparable act, or by infusion created; in proportion to the perfection and growth of the elemental principles, and when the palace should be fitted to entertain the royal guest; or, whether not all infused, till all was finished, or (as the Stoics) not till after birth, at the first ingression of air, &c.; which all are abstrusities as entangling and mysterious as *Entelechia* itself.[1]

In the mean time, some there are who thought it a diminution to the human Soul, that what has been held to derive its existence from the immediate infusion of the great Creator, should spring but from parental traduction, as other animals do. Whilst others esteem it to exalt its extraction, and do honour to her Maker, whose divine power they do not necessitate and engage to wait on every promiscuous blending; some whereof are highly unsuitable to His pure and Holy Nature.[2] But, even in illegitimate commixtures, God blesses nature, though not the perversion of it; and thus, man has will and strength to do many evil things by abusing his faculties. This I speak with all deference and submission to that late pious and excellent person. I say I do not see how it can dishonour the Divine Author, or

[1] Ἐντελέχεια—[a name given to the Soul by Aristotle; it has given rise to much discussion (see Donaldson's *N. Crat.*): now supposed to signify that by which the body *actually is*.—Liddell and Scott's *Lex.*]

[2] Sir Matt. Hale's Prim. Origin of Man.

His creature, to derive the Soul from a stock so ancient —a pedigree of such a series—whose root is immediately from the Almighty in the primary creation and infusion, before the fatal lapse, and still resembling Him, when purified by virtue and true piety, which restores her to her primitive beauteous image: for, though with some we make her not a goddess, nor with Philo and the Manichees, any part of that which is impartible—though not with Empedocles, plainly a god, yet with Lactantius, *Deo Similem*.[1]

Whatever, therefore, it be, this controversy is so finely sifted, solidly and so fairly disputed on both sides, that men will not find it easy to determine who is in the right or has the better; whilst man, consisting (as we noted) of *spirit, soul,* and *body*,[2] the two latter may be propagated, the first created, correspondent both to the Platonic and divine notion.

We have showed how the *Conciliators*, from their twofold production—the natural power of the creature, and the absolute power of the Creator—have educed the Soul out of some obsequious and obediential matter, so as the new soul, sprung from Adam, may become tainted, (as all of us are) though it should be immediately produced of God:[3] by which there does not appear any necessity of taking from God the honour of His original creation of the Soul, who gave life and soul, and bid it *increase and multiply*.

[1] Lanctan. De Opif. Dei, c. 17.

[2] I. Thess., v., 23.

[3] Eccles., xii, 7; Job, xxxiii., 4.

But to proceed: even the favourers of immediate creation and infusion, whilst the immaterial Soul exists in God, (whose Providence alone is that inexhaustible magazine of all intellectual beings) do allow *traduction* to the elemental pre-existent matter of all sensitive spirits whatsoever, which *specify*, by virtue of the fabric and composure of their *generator*. Now, (say these) as the sensitive and material Soul is propagated by *generation*, the immaterial is by *creation*. And first, for that no ignoble cause, out of its own sphere of activity, can produce a noble effect, (supposing a body to produce a soul) seeing the operations of the Soul are so infinitely superior to those of the body, as is manifest by the manner of those operations; and that her objects need no intercedent organ or medium between it and the faculty, educing also those operations from within by *elicit* and immediate acts, and such reflex ones as are totally foreign to the comprehension of other animals, perfecting the understanding by the most sublime and abstracted contemplations, and qualifying it to penetrate into causes and matter supernatural—nay, and even some out of the body, as ecstacies, rapts, visions, introversions, acts of volition, intuitive knowledge, and, above all, the *Spirit of Grace*—that she is likewise indivisible, as not having her being of form, that is, remaining uncompounded, immortal, and if not infinite (as God alone is infinite) yet, in a sort, indefinite, since nothing can fill and satisfy her which is less than infinity.

Moreover, she does not see, hear, touch, or, indeed,

exercise any sensual faculty, as the body does, things adequate and congruous to its senses, and yet she perceives intellectual notions, and what spirits and separate beings are, nay, and universal notions and things which have no real existence at all in nature. All which the assertors of *traduction* do, in no sort, detract from, whilst (as we have showed) they recur to a propagation of the primitive soul infused into the first man, and as capable of kindling others like it, as one torch to light a thousand, without diminution of its own light, heat, substance, or any other qualities; and this also in a manner much more spiritual than any thing material it can be resembled to: so as a body does not beget a Soul, but the Soul a Soul, and the body a body only. And why one Soul should not propagate another, as animal does animal, or as divers sorts of fruits are yielded by the same tree, without any transfusion or decision of parts, no convincing argument seems to appear. Nay, even as to division, no mortal can know how far spirits are indivisible, or whether they have no seminal excrescences, as a late Doctor[1] has noted: Men may be too much in the dark to determine; nor why the one should not propagate another as well as bodies do, are (say they) altogether as precarious and conjectural. Wherefore, to conclude this controversy with that text of Saint John, "The wind bloweth where it listeth,"[2] &c. Maldonatus hath this excellent note:[3]

[1] Dr. Parker, on the Pre-existence of Souls. [2] John, v., 8.

[3] Anima ubi vult spirat, id est, quæ vult, animat corpora, et vocem ejus audit, nempe hominem loquentem, equum hinnientem,

"The Soul animates the body as it pleases God, and we hear its voice in man speaking, in horses neighing, (and in other creatures by their different cries and noises) by which we are assured they live; but whence it proceeds and is propagated, how it informs the body, whither it goes, in what it ends, or how it vanishes and deserts the body, we are wholly ignorant of." To which let me add what is most certain, even from the light of nature—*Animorum nulla in terris origo inveniri potest—nec invenietur unde ad hominem venire possint, nisi a Deo.*[1]

In the mean time, (not as the Manichees, who held there was a good and evil principle or soul in every individual body) it must be acknowledged, that we have all of us a corruptible, mortal, (and if I may be allowed so to speak) a *caduce* and bodily soul, frail as the vessel which contains it, as well as that immaterial principle which we have been describing. For as to the multiplication of forms, as waiting the same matter, the objection is solved by the subordination of the one to the other, so as, whilst one is extinguished, the other survives as supreme. The sum of all is, that, whilst the rational soul is not immersed in matter, nor using

&c.: unde scis eos vivere, nescis tamen unde veniat, id est, unde gignatur, quomodo corpus ingrediatur, aut quò vadat, in quod desinat, quando egrediatur è corpore, &c.— *Com. in Evang. ad locum.*

[1] "The origin of the human soul is not discoverable upon earth: nor shall we find the source whence it could come to man, unless it be from God."—Cic., Tusc., lib. 1.

any organ, but is altogether conversant with things supernatural and from another state, there is a sensitive inferior reason, or passive intellect, which communicates with the first, but is of itself a plain and empty field, till influenced by a superior principle: that, as sensible and perceptive only, it has faculties in common like other animals; but, as it discourses, abstracts, and logically distinguishes, has relation to the intellectual soul. This latter is universally enlightened and comprehensive of all that knowledge, of which the other has no notions, namely, connate principles, concerning the existence of a Deity—that religion is due to it—that there is such a thing as conscience, natural justice, &c., besides other mathematical truths and peculiar comprehensions proper to man only, though his soul cannot draw geometrical schemes of them, without artificial aids and institution. It is by one of these man becomes a living, sensible creature; by the other a rational, intellectual one; whether of yesterday's creation, preexistence, or tradition, is left to men's judgments, but such a one, as needing no corporeal instrument to exert her faculties, as the animal life does; but by traducing that life as a medium uniting them, not as a form with matter, but by way of accidental essence. Nor is this co-existence with any mixturous confusion, or change of substance incompetent to actives and passive, connatural and reciprocal; but as an immaterial substance, suffers no composition, but remains separate from matter altogether: indeed, it moves, orders, and directs this matter, (as we have showed) but is not what it moves

and governs any more, than (to use Plato's expression) the pilot is the ship or vessel he steers. In a word, she is the body's essential form, making but one indivisible *Hypostasis*, which gives it life, and sense, and motion; and, therefore, neither is the Soul in the body, as a fish is in the water, or a bird in the air, so as not to live and breathe without it, but being that which only has the motive power and activity, is certainly superior and altogether independent to what it moves and acts upon.

To dismiss, then, these difficult researches, either what the Soul is, or how she descends into the body, whilst we should rather be solicitous how she goes out of it, there being more piety required than science in this dispute—it is sufficiently evident that the human Soul is a quite different substance from that of any other living creatures, by prerogatives vastly superior, performing actions worthy the dignity she challenges and the rank she holds; for, as one says, we must not think that the man begins, when he can feed himself and walk alone, when he can fight and beget his like, (for so can a camel and a boar) but he is first a man when he arrives at a certain steady use of reason; and to this some are early called, some later, some never, and they live like goats, and die like asses.

These things concern us infinitely more than the profoundest speculations of the Soul's essence and all our past inquiries. Therefore, we cannot but acknowledge how difficult a province he undertakes, who thinks to seize the royal and towering game, by dogmatizing and over peremptory assertions; when, to de-

base the pride of mortals, it proves (we see) so hard to assign any certain and ineluctable demonstration of the nature of the Soul's production and utmost comprehensions, to that degree as to force assent from Atheists, and even vicious persons, and such as will not give faith to any thing which contradicts their sensuality. But to those whose minds are defecate, and exercised in contemplations worthy the character of reasonable men, and look after other worlds, there's nothing more conspicuous and certain than the existence of this immaterial principle, (to which we shall add, because it comes next to be spoken of) *capable of immortality*.

CHAPTER III.

SECTION I. THAT THE INTELLECTUAL SOUL IS IMMORTAL.
SECTION II. THAT SHE SHALL RISE AGAIN, AND RE-UNITE WITH THE BODY.
SECTION III. A FUTURE STATE, AFTER THIS LIFE.
SECTION IV. AN ACCOUNT TO BE GIVEN OF HER ACTIONS IN IT
SECTION V. FOR A JUST RETRIBUTION.

SECTION I. THAT THE INTELLECTUAL SOUL IS IMMORTAL.

God dwells only in Himself: the plurality of all things and beings, therefore, proceeds from Him alone. All essence and super-essence, and if any thing be immortal, it is only by Him who is eternal and immortal, was always what He is, and always shall be.

We have hitherto endeavoured to clear the nature of a human Soul as a distinct substance from the animal life, both of mankind and all other his fellow-creatures, by several illustrious prerogatives. There remains yet one, which, shining above all the rest, entitles him to the dignity of yet a more near resemblance to his Divine Maker, and that is, his Immortality.

It is observed, in the Mosaic history of the Creation, that brute animals were all made and completed at once; whereas, man, being first composed of dust, God

did afterwards, by, as it were, a second and more solemn act, breathe into him the breath of life, by which *he became a living Soul;* by which the wise King distinguishes him from the brutes,[1] and that, when the body and earthly part crumbles into its original matter, the Soul takes wing, and mounts to the place whence it also came. And, therefore, have all holy persons recommended their spirits to the hands of Him from whose breath they received it, and from whence they deduce a proof of its state of immortality. Solomon, indeed, has a passage, that seems to make her equal with the souls of beasts; but does he not, even in the same book, reverse it all again? Let us hear the text:—

"I said in mine heart, concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts: for, that which befalleth the sons of men, befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast: for all is vanity: All go to one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.[2] Wherefore, I perceive that there is nothing better than that a man should rejoice,"[3] &c. To which we might add from another (though less authentic) book, imputed to the same Wise King:—[4] "Man is born at all adventure, and shall be hereafter as though he had never been: for the breath in his

[1] Eccles., xii., 7.
[2] Ibid., iii., 17—20.
[3] Ibid., v. 21.
[4] Wisd., ii., 2, 3, &c.

nostrils is as smoke, and a little spark in the moving of the heart, which being extinguished, the body shall be turned into ashes, and the spirit shall vanish in the soft air, &c. Come on, therefore, let us enjoy the good things that are present let us fill ourselves with wine; let us crown ourselves with rose-buds: let none of us go without his part of our voluptuousness: let us oppress the poor righteous man, nor spare the widow, nor reverence the aged,"[1] &c.

Thus much and more we might repeat out of that rhetorical chapter; than which there is nothing a plainer contradiction of that impious deduction, which libertines, and those who would be glad there were neither God to reward, nor justice to punish, thence pretend to derive. The truth is, *Man being in honour indeed,* (as David shows[2]) namely, the first man, before the fatal lapse, by it degraded himself of that dignity; so that he became like the beasts that perish; not that he was thereby really turned into a beast, but extremely like one.[3] For, whereas before he should not have died as beasts, (though, indeed, his body were of the same dissipable principles) but being translated into a more happy state, after a long and sweet fruition of the animal life below, he was, thenceforth, condemned to undergo the same fate of dissolution, as to his body and sensitive soul, which he has in common with beasts and other animals. The violation of that pact between God and man did subject him to a mortal condition as to his

[1] Wisd., 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. [2] Psalm xlix., 20.

[3] Eadem feritatis imago.—Ovid, M. i.

inferior soul; but that which he received by the Divine infusion is incorruptible (naturally speaking) and immortal. But it is not here we are as yet to bring, for proof, texts out of Scripture,[1] which abundantly assert the Soul's immortality, (as will appear upon consulting the margin) but to show that neither is it repugnant to nature.

The rational Soul is a self-subsisting being—has no mixture or corruptible element in its composition. The Soul is a complete and perfect substance; no divinity or philosophy has hitherto made it out, that its being is relative or incomplete. But, supposing it so, it does not, therefore, follow that it cannot live in separation, seeing the very flame of every candle gives light sufficient to this inquiry, which we find can and does subsist or consist, though the matter be extinct: not to instance in Licetus's lamp, or that said to have been found in Tullia's sepulchre,[2] though, if it wasted any matter, it would long since have been put out: and if

[1] Gen. iv., 20—v., 24—xv., 15—xlix., 33; S. Matt., x., 28; S. Luke, xvi., 22; II. Cor., v., 10, 1—xv., 19; Phil., ii., 16; I. Pet., iii., 19.; Rev., iv., 10.

[2] [The author, in his diary, thus relates the story—"In one of these monuments, Pancirollus tells us, that in the time of Paul III. there was found the body of a lady, swimming in a kind of bath of precious oil, or liquor, fresh and entire, as if she had been living; neither her face discoloured, nor her hair disordered; at her feet burnt a lamp, which suddenly expired, at the opening of the vault; having flamed, as was computed, 1500 years, by the conjecture that she was Tulliola, the daughter of Cicero, whose body was thus found, and as the inscription testified."]—Evelyn's

it spends no matter, it is all one as if it had none; for what need of it, if no use of it? and what use of it, if no feeding of the flame, but by spending itself. But the reason why the flame goes out, when the matter is exhausted, is, for that the minute particles of fire are soon overcome by the circumstant air, and dissipated rather than extinct, since it wants matter to keep it in union and society. But then, as the flame continues not, with respect to a candle's flame, when the matter is spent; yet fire can abide without matter to nourish it, for itself is doubtless matter and a substance, as well as motion: and so is the Soul of man. And, as the element or principle of fire, and the celestial bodies of fire, eat nothing, but live and subsist of themselves, so can the Soul, when divested of its relative body, and so would the flame of a lamp, or candle, could it mount to the regions of fire, as do the Souls to that of Spirits.

That the Apostle,[1] preaching to the Athenians, of the Resurrection, said nothing of the Soul's immortality, was, doubtless, because the *one*, of consequence, included the *other*; and, if it had not, yet were there no need to press that which in the learned Academy was almost universally believed; I say, *universally*, and so convincingly, that Cleombrotus was so satisfied in it by reading Plato only, that he precipitated himself into the sea, (for experiment sake) as no longer questioning

Memoirs, vol. i., p. 135. Montfauçon ("L'Antiquité Expliquée," v., 208) reviews carefully all the evidence in support of *lampes perpetuelles*, and condemns this story as fabulous.]

[1] Acts, xvii., 15, &c.

the truth: and him young Cato followed, and sundry others, who never would have resisted corporeal pleasure and the present fruitions of this life, had the Soul been corporeal and capable of those pleasures. Never would there still be such hostilities between the rational, the sensual, and concupiscible appetites.

Indeed, Epicurus and his tribe seem to have other notions of the human Soul; but so had not that great and noble philosopher, Trismegistus, of Egypt, the Gymnosophists of India, Job, the Chaldæan, and his friends in the East. It is confessed by Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, Thales, Milesius, and even by Aristotle himself, as the Council of Vienna, under Clement the First, and the Lateran, under Leo the Tenth, have determined, asserting that philosopher's opinion. Of the Latins, we have the incomparable Cicero, besides the whole Christian school every where: nor ought we reckon for nothing St. Paul's rapture, who purposely and with design adds—"whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell;"[1] plainly intimating, that it was no ways improbable that this *elapse* was not ecstatic and wholly out of the body, and so agreeable to the nature of the Soul, to operate in separation from it. Besides, God creating man after his own image, can have no other meaning than that of his being immortal; for else, what resemblance to our exterior figure and that of God, which has no shape?

Moreover, and as to the Resurrection, (of which anon) our Saviour proves it by his being God of the living,

[1] II. Cor., xii., 3.

not of the dead.[1] Nor is, indeed, the death of the Soul to be defined at all, there being no death of spirits, but annihilation, none, at least, that we know of or can possibly understand. For, if ceasing from operation be death, then it often dies before the body, as it frequently ceases to exert any of its nobler functions; as when we sleep, and neither feel nor understand. If it be replied that *then* it yet animates the body, (a sufficient indication of life) it is answered, that if one single act be enough to show the Soul to be alive, then the Soul is immortal: for, in Philosophy, it is a maxim, that the Soul desires nothing more than re-union. Now that which is already dead has no desire. Add to this, that the Soul can understand without the body; this is evident from her acts of reflection, such as, a desire to desire, a will to will, a remembering what she did remember, &c. So that, (as we said) if one act be sufficient to prove the Soul to be alive, the state of separation cannot be a state of death to the Soul, because she can then desire to be reunited to the body; and she can also understand, forasmuch as nothing can hinder her from performing those actions which depend not upon the body, in which the operations of the Soul are not organical.

Again, the Soul does not depend upon the body, but the body on the soul. She gives life to the body, receives none from it, but rules and governs the body as she pleases; and can ratiocinate and act vigorously when weak and even expiring, when the Soul (as we say) sits upon the body's very lip, ready to take flight. Be-

[1] S. Matt., xxii., 32; S. Mark, xii., 26.

sides, having no repugnant principles, it is indissipable otherwise than by a total annihilation: which we cannot reasonably think, since we do not find that Almighty God did ever yet put out of being any species which He ever created; much less is it likely that He should the noblest of His creatures.

In a word, God, even with a word, can extinguish this glorious spark; but that, I say, He ever *will*,[1] is no where to be gathered; and therefore Grotius doubts not to affirm, *velle Deum ut extinguatur animus, nullo potest probari argumento.* Wherefore the Soul, as she actuates the body, is a spiritual essence—as she survives the body, an immortal. Nor is that prince of philosophers to be otherwise understood, though heedfully attended, where he speaks of its separation from matter;[2] the Soul's conjunction with the body being so inconsiderable and accidental, in respect of its separation and eternity. Nor did Aristotle dispute it otherwise than by way of problem, whilst he names it *immortal* and *eternal.* Indeed, one of them we find who denied there was any such thing as a Soul at all—Aristoxenus[3] was this prodigy. But so averse were the rest from believing the Soul could die, that they rather held a transmigration.

Nor is any man so apprehensive of the body's corrup-

[1] Exod., iii., 6; S. Luke, xxiii., 46; Acts, vii., 5, 9; Rev., vi., 9, 10.

[2] Aristotle de Gen. An., l. ii., c. 3; lib., iii., c. v.

[3] [A philosopher and musician, first writer on music (about B.C. 320): taught that the Soul was merely the *harmony* of the nerves and muscles.—Cic. Tusc., 1; Lact. de Vit. Beat., c. 13.]

tion and the dispersion of its materials after death, as of his losing his being, sense, and knowledge, which being no part of body or matter, but quite of another kind, shows that we ourselves imagine strangely of some existence after life. Our very wondering and admiration at any great and unusual thing, told, read, or fancied by us, shows something to be in us of more great and noble; and that, however small and inconsiderable in bulk and stature, we comprehend such immense and stupendous magnitudes—bringing in all nature—all we see and all we do not see, even the interminable space itself—spirits, intelligences, and all we have hitherto enumerated, of high and abstracted, and that enter not under the criterion of our senses—in a word, this Soul of ours raises herself into the horizon of the intellectual world, observes the motions, magnitudes, distances, and influxes of the celestial bodies, visiting and pervading the universal phenomena. Add to this the inconceivable pernicity of thought, passing (as we said) from the centre of the goodly machine to the sublimest star in a moment's time, and can penetrate the adamantine doors of the Empyreal.[1]

Another argument may be, men's desire of perpetuating their name, families, and works — continual thought of the future, and natural apprehension of another state, and of conscience, though under no awe of human eye or notice (of which more in due place)—that

[1] Tantæ celeritatis, ut uno temporis puncto cœlum omne collustret, et, si velit, maria pervolet, terras ac urbes peragret, &c.—Lact. De Opif. Dei, c. 16.

the Soul is qualified to take cognizance not only of a few scattered particulars and finite notions, but of the universal *cyclopede*, the sublimities of logic, physics, metaphysics, the *acroamatic* and profounder mysteries of philosophy, explicating things by their respective causes. She apprehends compound and abstracted mathematics, with all her apodictical canons and speculations, and from *postulata*, *petitiones*, and a long series of premises and a train of causes, solves theorems, problems, angles, and intricate figures of geometry — the stupendous effects of numbers and algebraical supputations—can form axioms, and comprehend first principles, and is certain she does do all this, think, and exist, without the aid of corporeal species. She comprehends what is truth, what vice, moral and religious things, has a sense of her own excellency, the amazing notices of eternity and of God himself. Which all are things unelementary, incorporeal, and consequently immortal. In sum, no obscurity of the darkest dark, no profundity of the deepest abyss, no thickness, height, or depth, time, or place, obstructs the vast imagination of the human Soul, which passes, penetrates all things,

..... et extra
Processit longè flammantia mœnia mundi. [1]

We might now proceed to those many stupendous inventions by words, languages, ciphers, letters, figures, pictures, hieroglyphics, the daily excogitations of artful

[1] "Thus did he with his vigorous wit transpierce
The flaming limits of the universe."
Lucretius, book 1, translated by the Author.

productions in printing, shipping, gunpowder, clocks, mills, machines, and other *automata;* edifices, works in metal, glass, harmonious instruments, and a thousand other *ingenios* for use and pleasure—to name only the political sagacity of institutions in government, laws, poetry, rhetoric, &c., which, though noble and becoming, are yet inferior to what we have enumerated. All these, I say, the rational Soul of man brings and reduces into an atom; and all that moves, into that which is of itself immoveable, and never stirs from her place.

It is, in earnest, a surprising thing to behold a comprehension so vast, so obsequious yet to the laws of a matter so limited! A being so noble, espoused to the interests of a frail and wretched body, that has no relation to her, no proportion to one so narrow and confined! Wherefore, the difference is no less infinite between their natures: for, *if* the Soul be mortal, she must be material, which all we have said proves it not to be: and *if* composed of atoms, those motions and different configurations must also produce the noblest and most exalted thoughts; and if these particles chance to alter their course, so must our notions likewise. And thus, all false principles become false and erroneous rules, misleading us in all the researches we have so industriously made, not only of a Deity, but of all things else in nature whatsoever; so as two and two would no more be four; all would be uncertain, absurd, and extravagant: so necessary it is well to establish the immortality of our Soul and her prerogative, by all possible instances, and as we have, by irrefragable and undeniable ones.

As to the text[1] we named, wherein the fate of animals was made the same, man's indeed resembles that of brutes, as he gives reins to his brutish appetites, obnoxious as he is to the same accidents and events, the same infirmities and diseases: both descend into the earth, the common mother: so as, if one were to judge from the external face of things, and the promiscuous contingencies that happen to beasts and men, only by the force of our own ratiocination from external appearances, it would be somewhat difficult to determine what became of human Souls. But it is evident as the meridian Sun, that the penitential King (to whom the libertines, those hardly rational cattle, appeal) speaks only in the *person* of impious and wicked men, judging from such fallacious phenomena, and does not in all that passage so much as touch the intellectual soul; which he reserves to another place, namely, to chapter xii. And therefore, Theodorus[2] (who rejected this divine book) foully mistook the matter; for here the wise king, resuming the person of a religious man, tells us quite another story, namely, that at death *dust shall return to dust* and earth, as it was before, but the spirit to God, who gave it.[3] He spake before of our natural bodies dissoluble into the common principles, the sensible life vanishing into the same air; but here of a higher flight: "Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth;"[4] than which antipodes are not more opposite.

[1] Eccles., iii., 17, &c. [2] M. Vitus Theod. Sum. Cap. Vet. Test.
[3] Eccles., xii., 7. [4] Ib., iii., 21.

As to the text in Wisdom,[1] cited also by us, what more perspicuous than the author speaking in the person of debauched and abandoned epicures, who, set upon mischief, violence, and injustice, were resolved to take their fill of sensual fruitions, without regard to any future state? He tells us that God created man to be immortal, and made him to be the image of his own eternity, plainly affirming the spirits of the righteous are in the hands of God, where no torment shall approach them.

In the mean time, admitting the rational Soul to be of a pure, subtile, and ethereal nature—I say, supposing it not totally immaterial—[bodies by human art and conditure having been made resist putrefaction thousands of years, and subsist without a soul, as we find Egyptian mummies and the like to have done] I can see no reason why a Soul, separated from the body, may not by divine art be preserved, freed as it is from the more gross and corruptible elements; the same infinite power being able to render it as indissoluble and immortal as the more immaterial spirit, and as He certainly will do at the resurrection.

But there are so many cogent arguments to convince men that, when all is said, there is no place left for a considering person to doubt of the Soul's both present and future existence, even from arguments rationally deduced; seeing that which is destitute of bulk and quantity, and to which no necessary is deficient, must needs be imperishable; because it has not the power of

[1] Wisd., ii., 3.

past existence; nor can that be destroyed or corrupted, which, being insectile, has nothing to divide or oppose it. It is separate from all extensible matter and motion from another, and is therefore a self-mover, invulnerable, impassible, immortal; an act, not a virtue or power only; and, being an act, is incomposed, and, could she die, would be annihilated, and something become nothing, and nothing something, by some natural power: whereas, nature teaches that whatsoever enjoys its own existence, will remain so till a greater force expel it. And the Soul, thus indivisible, excluding all parts of quantity, no rarefaction or condensation, alteration of temperament, heat, cold, fire, or water; nor tyranny, of whatever quality, or power less than His who made her can dissolve her.

Moreover, as we showed, such a substance as performs its operations without the body, subsists without it; and so does the Soul, as oft as it is in real extacy and rapts, and she conceives things abstracted and universal, so that she needs no other proof for immortality.

The essence of things is defined by their operations, and the understanding and the will take place here: were that a perishable or material thing, perishable, sensible, and material things would improve them, which we find they do not. Material faculties lose their energy by the vehemence of their objects, while the Soul grows more vigorous and enlarged by contemplation, acting and re-acting beyond all organic power.

All material operations are, as we have showed, confined, so as our sensitive faculties can rise no higher

than the spring of matter: but so can the Soul, not only understanding and receiving all corporeal substances, which corporeal faculties cannot do (for the organ must be clear and colourless to receive coloured objects); but comprehends spiritual things, and sees within the veil. Whence it is evident that, as principles are in themselves incorruptible, so is the Soul; and that what is essentially life to others does never die or grow old; for, whilst corporeal things impair with time, our intellectuals improve.

It is, therefore, a noble and highly necessary belief, that the human Soul is immortal. Could we else imagine that Curtius, Regulus, and those other heroic persons, even amongst the Pagans, would so generously have hazarded and cast away their lives for their country, parents, friends, had they not some glimmerings and hopes of immortality, and not altogether for glory, and empty fame, which they know in time would vanish? But, as it was the universal voice of all nations, it was doubtless also implanted in them by Nature herself. Thus, to the sense of Solomon:

πνεῦμα μεν πρὸς αἰθέρα,
τὸ σῶμα δ' εἰς γῆν.[1]

It shall go from whence it came, earth to earth, ashes to ashes, the Soul to Heaven.

We might fill a first volume out of the writings of those famous men on this immortal subject. And he that shall turn over Cicero and Seneca alone[2] may be

[1] Eurip. Supp., v., 533.

[2] Cicero in Cato Maj., de Somn. Scip. Seneca passim.

stored with variety of suffrages to make our modern atheists blush. That the Soul returns to Heaven, whence she descended, was the firm persuasion of that excellent heathen, and another honest stoic,[1] "Death is not an evil; it is the nativity of eternity; we are all allied to God, from whom we came, and to whom again we go, let us once shake off the pressures which bear us down." And what if I should extort as much out of a professed epicure himself:

> Denique cælesti sumus semine oriundi;
> Omnibus ille idem pater est.[2]

Thus, too, Manilius,[3] to the same effect:—

> An dubium est habitare Deum sub pectore nostro,
> In cælumque redire animas, cæloque venire?

Whence Seneca doubts not to call the Soul a God;[4] so as Livy tells us the Romans consecrated a temple in the Capitol, by the name of *Mentis Ædes:* and, though she be no God, she is His image, and that image imported not so much His exterior figure as His immortal nature. To this purpose, Plutarch,[5] citing a verse from Pindar, doubts not to bring the Soul's descent from

[1] Epictetus.

[2] "Lastly, we all from seed celestial rise,
Which Heaven, our common parent, still supplies."
Lucretius, lib. ii., 990.

[3] Lib. iv., 886. See Virg., Georg., lib. ii. 325.

[4] Sen. Ep., 120.

[5] "Our bodies shrink to dust by death's decree;
The Soul survives, and fills eternity."
Dryden's Plutarch, *Life of Rom.*

God, and that she returns to Him again, after separation and purification from the earthly dross which hinders her ascent. Whence that of Heraclitus, *anima sicca sapientior*,[1] dry things being less clogged and more disposed to take wing. So fixed was this good man in the belief of the Soul's survivance, that he thinks the spirits of virtuous and religious men are not only transmitted out of brave and worthy persons into heroes, but, passing through those demi-gods, become deified, and even Gods themselves.

But, to render this notion safe and accommodate: though the human Soul be said not only by these extraordinary enlightened Heathen, but by the Sacred Oracle itself, to participate of the Divine nature, it is not to be understood of the communication of the Divine substance, but for similitude of properties and Divine gifts; which, though resembling, are yet but faint shadows and umbrations of that sublime nature; and so, verily, good and excellent men are rather the offspring and sons of God, nay, one spirit with Him; not, I say again, by essential propagation, but a certain virtual inhabitation.[2]

And, if this be not sufficient, turn over Plato, in his *Phædo*, introducing Socrates dialogizing with his friends, a little before he drank the fatal bane—than which there is nothing more to be wished to assert this article, even from the voice of a mere natural man, and to demon-

[1] ["A dry soul is the wisest"—quoted by Plutarch, (*περὶ σαρκοφ.*) in a similar sense.]

[2] S. John, i. 13—viii., 17; I. Cor., vii., 17, &c.; II. Pet., i., 13.

strate that he is not a mere piece of organized matter, or prettily contrived puppet only, but a vessel containing a sublime and immortal substance. Thus, though with Tertullian[1] we find, indeed, that the Soul's existence after death is not to be learned from the schools of philosophers, but from God Himself; yet the light which these men had was consonant to the truth, and haply at first derived from the holy prophets themselves; so generally they spoke their sense. And, as we affirmed, even Aristotle himself[2] (whatever some pretend) where he distinguishes of the vegetable, sensitive, and intellectual Soul, acknowledges the last, not only not to proceed from matter, (or using any organ) but to be plainly divine, that the agent intellectual is separate from matter, and immortal:[3] and the question he makes in that first of Morals to Nicomachus, Whether the dead have any perception, sense, or concern for their surviving friends, he concludes with the affirmative, which could not be, unless their souls were in being. In good earnest, so poorly is man gratified with sensual objects, that the whole world is not large enough to satisfy so much as one poor sense, the eye, single as it is, and but an organ of the body only; and, if whilst in the body we cannot attain what we long after, we shall certainly out of the body; since God has given no inclination to His creatures but what is profitable and necessary: and, therefore, shall either now

[1] De Anim., c. 4.
De Gen. An., c. 3, and De Anim., l. 3, c. 5.
[3] Metaphys., l. 12, c. 3.

or hereafter be satisfied: otherwise, they should be made in vain.

Now, there is nothing the Soul of man so much desires as immortality, and a future happy existence. Besides, it is natural for us to believe and hope it, and hardly possible for us to think or believe that a time will come, when we shall cease to be. What, therefore, is natural, is certainly true; for, were immortality supernatural, we could have no comprehension or notion of it, nor fancy what it were; which yet we can and do easily conceive. These impressions were not given to abuse mankind, seeing God created all His works in perfection, and made not that to be mortal, which he has capacitated to become immortal; or given him such impetuous desires, noble ideas, and an industrious pursuit of virtue, in hopes of attaining felicity without effect.

We have already spoken of his secret desire of perpetuating his being and succession, his insatiable thirst after fame and glory, his ambition of leaving some permanent memorial behind him, &c; and that not so much to satisfy others, as out of a secret hope and imagination at least, that the good he does here will turn to his account hereafter; not forgetting the inexpressible dread of wicked and profligate men, in affliction, and their last agonies, betraying their apprehensions and fears of a future state, in spite of all their hectoring it in prosperity. So wretched a thing it is, so to have lived, as to have no refuge from anxiety and torment, but annihilation. It was, therefore, the brave conside-

ration of Cyrus in Xenophon, and of Cicero and Socrates, the nobler Greeks and Romans, to wish that their souls might survive, and the best and wisest of them believed it too.[1]

So confident were the very Heathen world, and yet is, of a being after this life, that it is reported of the Chinese, and those of Japan, that they give letters of credence and exchange, and make provision for their friends and relations in the other world. What was else the meaning of their funebral pomps, their killing slaves and cattle, nay, the combustion of the Indian wives at the funeral-pile of their deceased husbands, and the burying of so much treasure with them? But of this we shall have further occasion to enlarge, when we come to show that, as this principle and soul of man survives the body, so is she in expectation of a due reward and a just remuneration in another state; wherein since the body as well as the soul shall both participate, having both been assisting to each other whilst united, that body shall likewise be joined to it again, never more to separate, after a miraculous *Resurrection.*

[1] Si in hoc erro, quòd animos hominum immortales esse credam, libenter erro: nec mihi hunc errorem, quo delector, dum vivo, extorqueri volo; sin mortuus, ut quidam minuti philosophi censent, nihil sentiam; non vereor ne hunc errorem meum mortui philosophi derideant. (Cic. Cato Maj.) "If I err in believing the souls of men to be immortal, I err gladly: nor do I wish this pleasing delusion to be rooted out, while I live; and if, when dead, I lose all feeling, as certain petty philosophers determine, I have no fear that after death they will laugh at my mistake."

SECTION II. RESURRECTION.

But, indeed, the belief and demonstration of this was so incredible and new a doctrine to the wisest of Heathens, that when the great apostle of the Gentiles began but to mention it among the learned Athenians,[1] some mocked, *what will this babbler say?* others, more curious, desired to *hear it again*, taking it for some strange and unheard-of God; whilst his business was to let them understand that the God, whom they did not know, and yet erected an altar to, commanded all men every where to repent, after his so long connivance at their ignorance and superstition; forasmuch, He had appointed a day in which He would judge the world in righteousness.

And where, indeed, is the difficulty to those who subject all things to the omnipotence of God, and that are daily spectators of so many strange things in nature, not only illustrating, but some of them even demonstrating, the possibility of the Resurrection? The day succeeds the night, in which it is, as it were, dead: and the sun sets as buried under the earth, and rises in the morning; we sleep and die in the nearest representation of death, and awake in a resuscitation, every time we take our natural repose; and though our bodies be not then dissolved, a thousand less corruptible are that die, and are buried, and re-flourish again after a tedious period; during which the hardest seeds corrupt and are turned to mucilage and rottenness, mortified with frosts

[1] Acts, xvii.

and covered with snow as with a winding-sheet—yet rise again, in the spring, from squalor and putrefaction, a solid substance—from dissolution of parts and sad deformity, to such vigour, beauty, and perfection, as even Solomon in all his glory was not clad like a lily of the common field.

This St. Paul held so convincing an argument, as he fears not to call him *fool* that seemed but to question it. For, from what inglorious and dirty rudiments do those daily miracles of the parterre result, whilst divers of their principles are so invisible, for a time, at least, that they seem utterly to be lost! Thus, the corn which feeds our bodies, and whose paste, or dough, of all things, most resembles our flesh, revives and multiplies; and he who sows, sows in hope; and after many a nipping frost and severe winter, it springs afresh. But that which was sowed is not quickened, *except it first die;*[1] nor is it the body it shall be: but bare grain, sown in corruption, raised in incorruption; and so shall our bodies be sown in dishonour, raised in glory; sown in weakness, raised in power; sown a natural body, raised a spiritual. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal immortality, and death itself be swallowed up in victory.

Consult we nature again, and we find several birds and beasts and innumerable insects pass, not only vulgar changes, but the silkworm, whose death, tomb, and resurrection, are plainly stupendous. And if thus in the works of nature, why should we doubt but the

[1] I. Cor., xv., 36, 38, &c.

God of nature, who framed us out of nothing, should even from nothing restore and make us something? It being so much the more difficult to give that a new being which had none, than to bring it into a second being, which has matter prepared for it before.

It is a known maxim in philosophy, and of unquestionable event, that the corruption of one thing is the generation of another. And can we believe that man, who is lord of all God's creatures, should expire and perish, and produce nothing but worms and silly vermin? Is it probable, or, indeed, imaginable, that God should thus restore all things to men, and not man to himself? Were there no other consideration but that of the principles of human nature, of the liberty and remunerations of human actions, and of the mutual revolutions and resuscitations of other creatures, it were abundantly sufficient to render the resurrection of the body almost demonstrable. Besides, howsoever the body's outward frame fall in pieces and to dust, the principles remain in the element; and, though our dissolved particles be scattered and hid from us, as to the places where they lie neglected, He who made them knows where to find them, and where to collect every individual atom, and how to re-unite them, not only in the same, but in a much more beautiful form. The matter, I say, remaining, is still as capable of resuming the pristine specific form and shape.

Nor is it yet a new-created body, but the same that dies,[1] the same that worshipped God, that died and

[1] Job, xix., 25, 26.

suffered for him. And why should not the same soul resume the same body, and not a brute's, as the Druids and Pythagoreans held? Since, otherwise, it were no resurrection, but a renovation, or recreation, rather, and be such as never was before, and so not rewardable, with justice, for merit, or punished for crimes.[1] The same numerical person shall, therefore, rise the same in identity, seeing, properly, nothing dies, or is raised, but the body; for the Soul never dies, or is buried; and all who were raised by Christ on earth, rose in the same body. But the change to be made shall not be altogether of this nature and substance only, but of the same condition and quality.

We behold how chymists resuscitate the forms of things, to all appearance, out of real corruption and confused chaos: what more wonderful than the process on crude mercury? now fixed, then volatile; now quite altered, anon reduced again through a thousand metamorphoses and changes. Things visible are made invisible, and visible again by the art of fermentation, circulation, putrefaction, cribration, and even recineration, raised from dust and ashes, defecated of their former dross. Does man go thus far by his skill in pyrotechny, and shall not God do more, who is the Cosmotect?

Now, in what body St. Paul above has taught us, and St. Augustine,[2] that we shall rise in a flourishing and mature age; not only men, but little infants, even

[1] See Tertull. Apol., c. 42.

[2] De Civ. Dei, lib. iv., c. 14, 15.

to the stature that Christ, our Head, attained, and that in substance, not deformity; forasmuch as infancy is imperfection, age, corruption.[1] Wherefore, the body shall be a glorious body, endued with all spiritual qualities of illumination, agility, and aptitude to ascend and pass regions of infinite distance and variety; and that as well women as men. Those who first published our Lord's resurrection, shall doubtless also partake of it.[2] Verily, were it not for this hope and assurance, how disconsolable would be the loss of friends and relations! This comforts us in afflictions, encourages in sufferings, incites to glorious actions, and even to die for our country and the public good. If the opinion of a *metempsychosis*, or empty fame, which is but the breath of ambitious man, engage him to so many brave and heroic exploits, what should not these glorious considerations!

> Felices errore suo, quos ille timorum
> Maximus, haud urget lethi metus; inde ruendi
> In ferrum mens prona viris, animæque capaces
> Mortis, et ignavum est redituræ parcere vitæ.[3]

[1] De Civ. Dei, lib. xxii., c. 13, &c.

[2] "Et qui utrumque sexum instituit, utrumque restituet." (S. Aug. De Civ. Dei, lib. xxiii., c. 17.)—"He who appointed both sexes shall restore both."

[3] "Thrice happy they beneath their northern skies,
Who that worst fear, the fear of death, despise;
Hence they no cares for this frail being feel,
But rush undaunted on the pointed steel;
Provoke approaching fate, and bravely scorn
To spare that life, which must so soon return."

Rowe's Lucan.

In a word, if God be Almighty, as He certainly is, and knows what is to be done, as he also does, and has power and skill to do as He pleases—to Him nothing is impossible. He who knows every atom, every single dust, tomb, and grave, and looks into the darkest abysses and the most secret receptacles, where men are sleeping in their dissolved causes, can fetch and summon every minute particle, and join them together as before, and give them new life, and raise them up; and the man who once was dust, become man again; seeing whatever we lose in death is not lost to God: and, though our parts be dissolved, yet they perish not, but are reposited, and in safe hands.

Let us examine history and matter of fact. We have the resurrection of One, who had no less than five hundred testimonies of it. Christ, the first fruits and head, being raised,[1] needs must the members follow. The holy Apostles touched his body, heard him speak, saw him eat, nay, conversed with him, not for a day or two, but during the space of forty, and then beheld him ascend above the clouds. And, though Felix accounted St. Paul a madman for affirming it, the evidence was so full and undeniable, that it obtained credit, and prevailed in spite of all contradiction, not of credulous and easy men, but of the most learned, sober, and inquisitive persons in the world, and such as joined the most maliciously to detect the imposture, had there been the least prevarication in it. Therefore, to disbelieve this

[1] I. Cor., xv., 6.

truth is not to discredit Scripture[1] only, but all good history, ancient and undoubted records of the most concurrent and disinterested testimony that ever was, as in due place we shall come to prove.

In the mean time, we find holy Job[2] so early of this faith, and so peremptorily asserting it, as that St. Jerome tells us, no man ever since our Saviour's real resurrection could speak more expressly concerning it. It is doubtless, if not altogether, the most ancient record extant in the world. Nor sooner hear we of the death and dissolution of mankind, but we have news of his reviving, and this by a Gentile, too, to show that they, as well as the Jews, were to enjoy the fruit and benefit of it.

But though Pliny, indeed, and some philosophers, esteemed it impossible even for God Himself to raise the dead, the same they held of a Creation *ex nihilo*. And, I know, Socinus, the Quakers, and some other sectaries and fanatics, have applied those words of Job to a temporal restitution of health and reparation of his losses: but the interpretation is forced, wrested, and plainly absurd, and contrary to the whole stream of ancient church, the clear sense of the sacred text, and the title he has given of a *Redeemer*, which shows he understood it of none but *Christ*. That it was revealed, likewise, under the Law, we learn the Sadducees to have erred, because they knew not the Scriptures, nor

[1] Exod., vi., 4; Psalm xc., 3; Isaiah, xxvi., 19; Dan., xii., 2; Matt., xxii., 31.

[2] Job., xix., 25.

the power of God, whilst the Pharisees maintained both; that is, the being of separate spirits, and belief of the Resurrection. Hence that extreme care and solicitude, and cost of embalming, and funebral rights, as well among Pagans as Jews, having respect to a future state after this life.[1]

SECTION III. A FUTURE STATE, AFTER THIS LIFE.

We read not of any so barbarous and ignorant, but who had, at one time or other, notions of good and evil, felicity and misery, reward and punishment, according to demerits; for such there were ever amongst the most savage of the New World, who never (that we can tell) had any traffic or commerce with the Old; and whoever has but a suspicion of this, does consequently fear or virtually acknowledge a supreme justice. But of this hereafter.

The natural appetite which all men have to knowledge, and the complacency we take in contemplation, the restless and never satisfied eye and heart, with riches, possessions, beauty, honour, learning, power, and whatever else this world is able to afford, whilst all other creatures are contented with food and natural things, tell us aloud, that there is something still behind the curtain of more perfect and consummate wanting, to fill our capacities and complete our happiness. I say, besides the sentences of wise men and divines, our natural sentiments of eternity and another state, our immense desires of lasting fame and of leaving some-

[1] Tertull. Apol., c. 42.

thing of memorable behind us, and, above all, the remorse, the harrowings and strokes of conscience, or approbation and satisfaction, upon the doing of worthy or wicked actions, accusing or excusing, according to the obliquity or rectitude: and that which we apprehend and would reconcile, when in imminent peril and near dissolution, not to be bribed or any ways pacified with all the delights and charms of this world, not to be put off by the most potent monarch—are all of them demonstrations of a future state. Besides, all things here are in continual flux and vicissitude, nothing permanent; no prince, no private person, nor state of life, assured one moment. It must be, therefore, somewhere, and the perfection not of a single endowment only, but of our entire nature, which can make us happy, and which, not to be found in this, must in another state.

If there be anything desirable beyond this life, and what this world affords, as we all confess and find there is, it is certain it exists and is in being somewhere; seeing God has created no appetite but what He has provided something adequate to satisfy and fill. Had any mortal man been the first inventor of the opinion that there was another state of things, and a life to succeed this, he would most undoubtedly have been named, and assumed it to himself that he was so owned, and gloried in it; so that it is impossible so vast a sect should have no known master among men. This makes it certain, then, that it came from none but God, and could be no otherwise derived than from Heaven.

What can be the reason of the universality of this belief, but our fears and doubtings, or rather our undoubted apprehension of a being, when all our actions shall be scanned, approved, or condemned? Was there nothing to remain after this umbratile life, why are men, above all other creatures, so solicitous for nothing? Whence proceeded the notion so early, so generally? Why all this dispute among both learned and unlearned, barbarous and civil? And why, in our most decrepit age, is the Soul most vivid and quick, and most greedy of knowledge, and less and less satisfied with material speculations.

The truth is, without this there could be no living in the world, no government, no society. Paradise and Hell, reward and punishment, as the Rabbies wisely say, are the two pillars that support and bear up the world; and God Almighty saw it, and not the politics of men, as Atheists would make us believe.[1]

Hence the adoration of departed heroes and apotheoses among the ancients, believing them to survive their body; hence their reports of the Elysian Fields and Infernal Shades, of Minos and Rhadamanthus, Furies and hellish companions, and all that they have spoken of retributions, which both philosophers and poets either believed or feared. They tell us of the Stygian Lake,

[1] Non leve momentum apud nos habet consensus omnium, aut timentium inferos, aut colentium. (Seneca, Epist. 17.) "The universal consent of mankind has with me no little weight, whether it be of those who fear, or those who fondly dwell upon a future state."

dark and gloomy recesses, of Ixion wheels, *tantalizing* and horrible torments, and vultures feeding on the liver, intimating the restless stings of conscience; Ætnas, Vesuviuses, Heclas, and other volcanoes, and perennial burnings, showing the possibility of eternal fire—a true and real fire,[1] whose smoke ascends for ever—the never-dying worm, anguish of mind—the killing thought of eternity and despair. Oh, inexpressible misery! no release till the last mite be paid, which can never be; there being no repentance wrought in those flames, no purgation of sin, no sanctification of nature, no justification of person, and, therefore, no salvation, without the mediation of a Saviour, who will then have given up and resigned that office; and so no remedy for ever.[2]

The Socinians, indeed, pretend, and would fain have, that the eternal death, threatened in Scripture, signifies annihilation only, but know not how to avoid that expression of *everlasting fire.*[3] The Jews believed a second death; though more obscurely then intimated than afterwards. The weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth, was by our Blessed Saviour frequently spoken of to them upon several occasions; as also the Apostles of our Lord, of a mist of darkness, by St. Basil termed, an obscure fire, tormenting and heating, without the least

[1] Isai., xxxiv., 10.

[2] "Nulla major et pejor est mors, quàm ubi non moritur mors. (S. Aug. De Civ. Dei, l. vi., c. 12)—"No death is so terrible, as that state where death never dies."

[3] S. Matt., xviii., 8—iii., 15; Deut., xiii., 5; Isai., xxii., 14—lxv., 6.

cheerful light. And this did the Heathen call *Tartarus*, (so Anacreon, the debauched poet, fearing to die, lest he should be condemned to it) for they feigned the place a dismal, uncomfortable den, in the bowels of the earth, and called it the *Abyss*, the *Infernal Lake*,[1] *Hades*, (which Plutarch says is a dark pit) and so *Sheol's*[2] name also mentioned in Scripture, and the Lake, a fiery gulf,[3] whither, likewise, the devils were sent. The valley of Hinnon was a type of hell, for the cruelty of the idolatrous Jews offering their children and human sacrifices to Saturn; it was a deep bottom, where they flung all their carrion, as described by the Prophets:[4] enough and sufficient to prove, that they all believed a state after this life, and that there is an account to be given of our actions.

SECTION IV. THERE IS AN ACCOUNT TO BE GIVEN OF OUR ACTIONS.

But, because sentence is not immediately executed against evil men, therefore, their hearts are fully set and bent to do wickedly; they wonder that some ghosts

[1] Job., xxvi., 6; Isaiah, v. 14—xiv., 9.

[2] [*Sheol*, a Hebrew word, signifies "The Invisible state of the Dead," in general. (Dr. Parkhurst's *Heb. Lex.*) The seventy translate it by ἅδης, (Hades) which, Dr. Campbell thinks, should never be rendered *Hell* in the New Testament, as it is now understood; though in its primitive signification it answers to *Sheol*.—See Dr. Camp., *Prel. Diss.*, vi., p. 82.]

[3] S. Matt., viii., 29; II. Pet., ii., 4.

[4] Isai., xxx., 33; Matt. iv., 1; Matt., xiii., 50; Luke, xvi., 24; Rev., xx., 10.

are not sent from the other world, to give them warning and assurance of the being of such a place; and men would prescribe to the Great Arbiter of things what we fancy and would have. He must humour every one's curiosity, not his reason only: we *will* have our senses satisfied; and, though that were insupportable to flesh and blood, should they be taken at their word, they call for they know not what, and will only trust their own eyes before the God who made them! We *see* not, indeed, these things, yet plainly perceive them; and innumerable most powerful operations are there, even in God's creatures, which, to our senses, are invisible as the wind: and the sun itself, which makes all visible, does almost put out our eyes with its lustre, nor can we perceive our own souls, the only nearest and most considerable portion of us! What thanks, or reward, then, can those pretend for their faith and virtue, who will credit nothing save what they see and touch? What exercise of worth or goodness, when those who were every day witnesses of so many wonders and real miracles did not profit by them? We also daily behold them in the continued economy of nature, yet slight and pass them by; so that, should one rise from the dead, some would yet not believe.

If the excellent things proposed and expected, and the punishments of the other state to those who do well and ill, were not incitements to govern ourselves accordingly, what were the merits of faith, justice, charity, patience, and other virtues? Had goodness and virtue no other remuneration but itself, (which the philoso-

phers hold sufficient) they must often act against their present interest, and what can that felicity be? And, therefore, virtue is not that happiness, but the way leading to it. Nature prompts to acts of virtue, and to preserve herself, but always on account of retribution; and *God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him;* there being no sign of universal justice in this world: and if there be such a thing as justice and goodness in the Divine nature, (as there certainly is) then must there be a reward for those who obey Him, and a punishment for those who do otherwise. The distribution is somewhere and at some time; for either there is a Judge of our actions, or there is none; and in case there be, He must be just; and then there is a trial to be expected, there being here no equal distribution at present, where for the most part wicked and ungodly men prosper. For man, being a free agent, capable of doing good, or evil, and consequently obnoxious to reward or punishment, and capable of another state in which to receive it; seeing, also, that in this life, not only good men pass unrewarded; and that some, again, are so notoriously wicked, as no punishment here is sufficient to chastise and reform them, such as pirates and sea-robbers, who cast so many innocents overboard, and spoil the labours of honest men; murderers, and persecutors, and haughty tyrants, that make invasions on their quiet neighbours, and begin unjust wars; that pursue men with malice, secret backbitings, and use devilish arts, perjury, and stick at no wickedness to compass their ends; and that many such are placed out

of the reach of common justice, such as those mighty ones, whose ambition and pride, lust and avarice, destroy whole nations, churches, and whatsoever is sacred. I say, seeing justice is so unequally distributed amongst these wicked men here, there must, of congruity and natural necessity, be a future calling to account. For Almighty God, being also a free agent, is not obliged to exercise either punishment or reward, seeing that would make Him a necessary agent; but as He has decreed and declared Himself, not in His Word only, but in the opinions and confessions of all rational creatures, Heathen, and others, who knew not the Scripture. And, though God might make this appear by examples in this life, He is pleased awhile to suspend it, having given mankind sufficient reason to guide himself by.

The discrimination here (all things happening alike to all) is very invisible as to good and evil events; which still renders it most agreeable to reason and justice, that there will be an after-reckoning; seeing the greatest punishment and most consummate happiness is neither sufficient to deter men from vice, nor to render good and righteous men perfectly happy and completely satisfied. All is here perpetually changing; nor prince, nor private person, nor state of life, afford one moment's repose. It must, therefore, be the perfection not of any single endowment, but of our entire nature, which can render us happy; and *that* is not to be hoped for in this life.

Jews, Pagans, Christians, believing that all things which had beginning should have a period, expected an

universal conflagration; the stoics, and divers philosophers, were of that faith—Plato, Aristotle, Diogenes, Laertius—that He who made the world was able to unmake and destroy it again. So the Poet:

> "Unà dies dabit exitio, multosque per annos
> Sustentata ruet moles et machina mundi."[1]

And all this generally by fire, as may abundantly appear by the writings of Seneca,[2] Cicero, Pliny, Ovid, Lucan, the Sybils, from some tradition, most likely from the people of God. They held a general assizes, to which all should be summoned, and had serious apprehensions both of the power of natural conscience and exactness of Divine justice; whence it follows that there was to be a *just retribution.*

SECTION V. JUST RETRIBUTION.

At this Felix trembled, on S. Paul preaching of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come,[3] and that by reason of things of which he was notoriously guilty; which, being himself a Heathen, he would never have had any sense of, had he not both believed and feared the consequence. Wherefore, though the Athenian Philosophers derided the Apostle's doctrine concerning the

[1] "One fatal hour must ruin all:
This glorious frame, that stood so long, must fall:"
CREECH—Lucret., l. v., 96.

[2] Seneca, Ep. 71; Nat. Quæst., l. iii., c. 28; Lucan, Phars., lib. i., v. 73; Ovid, Met. xv.

[3] Acts, xxiv., 25.

Resurrection, they did not in the least contradict his denouncing a judgment to evil-doers, and the telling them there was a day in which God would judge the world,[1] because it was a principle of their own before, and so rational a one to those who had a notion of God. Wherefore, Justin Martyr[2] speaks of this as their universal creed, and so does Tertullian, &c., from their frequent expressions to that effect, upon occasion of any wrong or injury.[3] But Plato surpasses them all, as cited largely by Eusebius[4] and Theodoret.[5] And the barbarous islanders concluded that vengeance had seized on S. Paul's hand, as thinking him some facinorous person, though he had escaped the shipwreck.

Were there not some dreadful expectation to come, Death would not be the King of Terrors: for it is the fear of dying after death which creates this fear. This it was that caused the wise Socrates to acknowledge that nothing would be so frightful to him as death, were he not assured of going to a great and wise God, from whom he expected to be transformed into some *daimon*, or god-like spirit, and speaks as divinely of the seclusion of profane and impious wretches[6] from future happiness, as any Christian can do. Nor only Socrates,

[1] Acts, xvii., 31.

[2] Apology.

[3] Deus videt, Deus reddet, &c.

[4] Euseb. Præp. Evang., l. xi., c. 38—l. xxii., c. 6.

[5] Serm. de fin. et Jud.: ὅτι ὡς ἀκριβῶς ἐπίστευεν ὁ Πλάτων εἰς τὸ ἐν ᾅδου κριτήριον.—"Plato believed firmly in a judgment to come."

[6] Plato's Cratylus and Theætetus.

but Socratic Cicero, Plutarch, and others, more than obscurely hinting at a notion of a right and left hand. And, indeed, the common proportion and usages in this world suggest some remuneration to men as they deserve; however, they too often miss of it, through the iniquity and injustice of men.

They did (as the patriarchs of old) confess that they were but strangers and pilgrims belonging to another country;[1] for to this sense do both Trismegistus and Pythagoras, Jamblicus, the Greek satirists and poets, universally give suffrage more than once; it being, as we said, the catholic belief of the wiser Heathen. The expressions of Zoroaster are wonderful; so in the golden verses of Pythagoras, Epicharmus, &c. Let us hear Cicero for all: "*Certum esse ac definitum locum in cœlo, ubi beati ævo sempiterno fruantur.*"[2] What can be plainer? The translation of Enoch, the rapt of Elias, &c., might possibly give hints to such as may have heard of these miracles, or lighted on the Old Testament;[3] even among the Heathen, many of the curious, both of the Greeks and Romans, happening upon its translation into the learned tongue by the care and command of Ptolemy. And as for the Patriarchs, it is evident they did not at all reckon upon the transitory enjoyment of this life; which is very convincing, both against Papists and Anabaptists, in their exposition on the creed, &c.; as if

[1] Hebr. xi., 13.

[2] "There is a sure and fixed place in Heaven, where the blessed enjoy life everlasting."—Somn. Scip. 3.

[3] Gen., xv., 1; Job., xix., 29; Ps. xxvii., 13.

those holy persons had not some promises in the Old Testament, and most perspicuous ones in the New; besides what we find in the Maccabees,[1] the mother encouraging her seven children to undergo their martyrdom. Let, therefore, these passages be consulted by the doubtful, and Mr. Thorndike's *Epilogue*.[2]

In a word, God, who has enjoined a law and duty, that duty performed and law observed, at the price of so much suffering and contradiction of evil men, infers a necessity of a future remuneration, for that which he suffers or falls short of here: because He, who is the fountain of justice, will maintain His character: "shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" Yes, yes; there will come a time, when all such as are in the grave shall hear the Judge's voice, and come forth, as Lazarus did, they that have done good to the resurrection of life, and they who have committed evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.[3]

And, though the heathen had no revelation of this article, their revolution of souls for animadversion and punition—their canonization and *apotheosis* of excellent and deserving persons—their belief that there was above a place not subject to alteration, where they lived and

[1] S. Matt., xxv., 5, 46; S. John, iii., 6—xii., 25; I. Tim., vi., 14; Titus, iii., 7; II. Cor., v., 1; I. Pet., v. 3, 4; II. Tim., iv., 8; James, i., 12; Heb., xii., 22, 29; 2 Macc., vii.

[2] Book iii., ch. xxvi., &c. [An Epilogue on the Tragedy of the Church of England, by Herbert Thorndike. Published in 1659, and originally sold at the sign of the Bell, St. Paul's Churchyard.]

[3] John, v., 24, 29.

enjoyed perfect tranquillity—shows what they thought of hereafter. There were in Varro's time no fewer than two hundred and eighty eight opinions concerning the Sovereign Good, both what and where it was. The Epicureans placed it in sensual pleasure here; the Stoics, in morality; the Peripatetics, in philosophy and knowledge of nature, policy, and contemplation; the Academics, and Plato, who nearest approached the truth, in being united to the life of the Deity, abstracted from earthly and mundane things. And he was certainly in the right; for happiness consummate is that which comes nearest to the fountain of happiness, which is God.

For this the bodies of holy and just persons, as well as souls, being spiritualized and made incorruptible, shall be adapted when once they come into the world and region of spirits, and that all our parts and faculties are raised to their utmost enlargement and capacity; our wills perfected with absolute and indefective sanctity[1] in exact conformity to God's will, and full liberty from the servitude of sin, no more perplexed about its choice, but enjoying a radical and fundamental emancipation, shall entirely embrace that consummate good! When all our affections shall be regulated unalterably, and our whole man happy in all the complements of solid fruition! When we shall enjoy an absolute exemption from pain, sickness, want, labour, possibility of sinning — unspeakable complacency flowing from all these perfections, and fruition of the Sovereign Being,

[1] John, v., 24; I. Cor., xiii., 12; xv., 49; II. Cor., v., 4, 8.

the vision of God to continue eternally, as to their duration, in a standing calm, without any flux and succession of time![1] When we shall enjoy, see, and feel such glorious things, and hear words which are unutterable![2]

These contemplations are profitable to deter us from sin, and provoke us to holiness; since "without holiness no man shall see God." They breed, and will nourish in us filial fear and caution, seeing we have to do with a great and just judge, one who will not be mocked—with a jealous God, a consuming fire—a powerful God, from whom none can deliver: and with all this, a benign and merciful God, ready to pardon those who return to virtue and sober counsels. The contemplation of a future life and happy eternity will excite our contention to enter into this happy state, and serve to wean our affections and inclinations from sensual pleasures, and to place them above with God, at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore—in sum, to take up the Cross, if it lie in our way, and to despise whatever obstacle we may meet withal, for the illustrious things which are set before us, and proposed to those brave and heroic souls that overcome.

The faculties of the human soul capacitate us for a more excellent and sublime condition than our fellow-creatures. Man looks upward, whilst they grovel and pore upon the ground on which they tread. His thoughts are of things abstracted, and meditate on the Divine Nature and attributes of God, disposing him to

[1] Heb., v., 9; ix., 15; xiii., 14, 21. [2] II. Cor., xii., 4.

religion and piety, and to notions and sentiments of nature totally different from things that perish.

Men could not so universally value goodness, and, when in sober thoughts, abhor villany, did not something imprinted within leave those characters. For no man thinks well another should do him injury; and there is such a thing as repose and satisfaction after a good and honourable, that is, after an honest and worthy, action. And all virtue has certainly a suitableness to some natural principle in us; as, on the contrary, the conscience of vicious men is a confirmation of it. Besides, every sensible being has an innate and insite love and friendship to itself, and so cannot but desire its eternal good and preservation in a state and condition most perfect; and man being composed of soul and body, *both* must be gratified in some place and circumstance adequate to their constitution and nature.

This notion of an after-being and retribution is still a corroboration of what we have all along been asserting, namely, of the existence and nature of God, prompting our due and solemn addresses to what is worthy of Him; else, it were a dishonour to offer Him *any* worship. But when we find a Being so transcendently perfect, as that it depends on nothing, and everything depends on it, *this* challenges our utmost veneration, and invites our love and service. We need, therefore, no compulsion to engage our affections, and to the belief of these things; seeing the light of nature leads us to them, whatever prejudices ill education, institution, or other averse accidents may have produced — through the

malice of seducing spirits—the ignorance and impiety of others; whilst even the idolatry and superstition they have introduced to obliterate and blot out of our minds the belief of a future state, were argument enough to convince men that there *is* one.

Egregious, then, is the madness of those who run the hazard, whether there be a life to come or not; since, if none, the rules and precepts required to attain the supposed bliss, are only such as a wise, and even natural man, would prefer, for the excellency and benefit of them in this present world; and so did Epictetus, Socrates, Antoninus, Seneca, Trajan, Severus, and several brave and virtuous heathen. But, in case it should fall out that there be another state and appendant retributions, what can be more deplorably miserable, than not to have lived well? And if this be not an undeniable demonstration, how counsellable it is to resolve upon a course of virtuous living, nothing in nature is.

To conclude, this doctrine is not only from the Scripture oracles, which we are yet to prove divine and infallible, but the dictates of nature and of nations; the Druids, Egyptians, Persians, Indians, of the old world, and those of the new.[1] In a word, the end of man is here, (and from all we have asserted) to lead a life proportionable to his worthy nature—in the knowledge of his Maker and His works—sense of the divine love, favour, protection, beneficence, and future well-being.

We see, then, the universal suffrage of the Pagan world: and should not we rather believe who besides

[1] Homer, Diog. Laertius. Plutarch Lucan.

all this have the Divine Revelation, (the wisest, most knowing, and best of men in all ages unanimously agreeing) than be carried away with a few fool-hardy and abandoned wretches, ignorant and debauched fops, who tremble to die in unbelief, though they seem to live in that magnificent and daring infidelity. There can be no rational, sedate, deliberate bravery and real courage indeed, but in such as have good and solid hopes of a future state and rewards for well doing: since, with Plato,[1] death were an insupportable evil, without hopes of a better life, in almost the words of St. Paul,[2] Verily, we do not think nor dare we trust it, the proudest of us all, that we shall one day be nothing, or happy if we continue wicked; for separated souls do undoubtedly survive, by virtue either of their spiritual and immortal nature, or by some Almighty Power preserving them from being dissolved, and are as really in some place, if not circumscriptively, as proper bodies are, yet determinately and really present somewhere, and not elsewhere.

In this state it is she also exercises her intellectual powers; when in death, passing by a real motion from body to such other receptacle her just Creator shall assign her, according as she is qualified for bliss or misery. Certainly, that substance which can and does exist without the body, and think, too, what she pleases, notwithstanding the frailties of the body, has a being after body; and the mere capacity of the soul to apprehend these notions sufficiently evinces that there is an

[1] Phædo. [2] I Cor., xv., 19.

extra-mundane, posthume state and condition yet to come, all which gives presage of its sempiternal existence; and that, whilst the soul, having emanant acts not belonging to the body, even whilst she remains within it, can exist without it. And if no substantial entity can be annihilated, it must remain for ever. In vain were else all those ceremonies, and ablutions to lustrate, purify, and prepare the soul, which even the very Pagans used, directed only by the light of nature; so that this death of ours is, as Heraclitus truly said, the soul's life, and our life her death.[1]

These, (albeit there are many certain truths, which are incapable of proof from natural appearances, and discoveries cognoscible by us) to me are irrefragable and convincing demonstrations of something still in expectance, of more accomplished and consummate of our nature, which this inextinguishable inclination and perpetually thinking substance aspires and breathes after; and of which we become the more assured as we improve our reason and our virtue—grow more religious and abstracted from the animal world. And that the essential man, the Soul, approaches nearer her restitution, by a thorough purgation from corporeal taints and impurities, and lives nobly under the power of godlike dispositions, and as becomes the dignity of his nature; preparing himself for that Dei-form, angelical, and bright condition, when all these impediments, that charge and clog us here, being shaken off and left behind, we shall be invested with the celestial robes, and

[1] Plato, Phæd. Porphyr. de Antro Nymph.

by an union more intimate and mysterious, derive new life and knowledge from the fountain, or rather ocean-sea of all perfection. For thus the Supreme bounty delights to diffuse itself on the creature, without any diminution of his own immensity, or essential properties, which alone are intransient and incommunicable.

That God has provided so glorious mansions for worthy and holy souls, sufficiently declares how precious that substance is, and how dear to Him, which we, whom it most concerns, take so little care of. For, what shall I call that Θεοῦ μοῖραν?[1] not to say *part of the god-like essence*, with the Manichees, who dreamt that, when it left the body, it reverted to the Divine original:

Sive hunc divino semine fecit
Ille Opifex rerum.[2]

but, with St. Paul, a particle of His goodness and wondrous bounty, qualifying her to partake of the Divine nature.[3] Still, as the image is ever inferior to the prototype, so is the Soul in respect to her Maker. She is, therefore, a similitude of Him rather, a divine rivulet or emanation, a beam of His splendour, like that of the sun, which makes day, without diminution of his glorious body. She is, doubtless, the most charming character of His image.[4] Could we with mortal eyes

[1] Macrobius Somn. Scip., l. i., Plato. Critias.

[2] "Whether with particles of heavenly fire
The God of Nature did his soul inspire."
Picart's version of Ab. Bannier.—Ovid, Met., lib. i., 80.

[3] Zach., xii., 8.

[4] Ad divinam imaginem propiùs accedit humana virtus, quàm figura.—*Cic. de Nat. Deor.* "The divine image finds a closer likeness in human virtue, than in human form."

behold the Soul of some excellent and righteous man, how (like the Philosopher's naked virtue) would it charm us with admiration! And it is that which truly exalts our nature, and carries it up to those supernal mansions, and brings it into an assimilation of our resplendent Maker, and to an internal sensation of His infinite perfections. It is for this, and the life to come, so many brave souls have despised the delights and sweets of life and ease here, to embrace tortures, fire, racks, and gibbets, and even Phalaris's bull.

Man is the only creature that goes erect and looks up to heaven,[1] as if he had nothing to do on earth but to set his foot upon it. His native country is above;[2] his nature does not acquiesce in any terrene elementary thing; something there is he is still in want of, however, in the midst of fulness; for, wherever nature has left a capacity of receiving an increase of perfection from some other thing, there she has planted an appetite to enjoy it. And what can this be but an immortal and imperishable condition, which, not being to be found below, must somewhere be above? God has made nothing in vain; but so has suited objects to the nature of all, that there is nothing left us to desire which is not somewhere to be had.

There will come a time when what here we know but in part shall be entire and consummate. Faith and sanctity and other divine and passive graces and perfections, which lead to happiness and are things spiritual, are not imparted to us for no end, as they would be,

[1] Ovid. Met., i., ver. 85, &c. [2] Diog. Laert. in Anaxag.

were there no future expectation. We cannot, therefore, reasonably imagine that the human Soul was sent into us with these infinitely abstracted comprehensions, without proportionable objects to fill all its powers, and leave no capacity unsatisfied one day, where the understanding shall be exalted to its highest pitch, and that, with an absolute and indefective plenitude, large as our capacity, and permanent as our being.

There is in every one of us a certain innate aspiration to live for ever; and, as Cicero expresses it,[1] a kind of natural augury of a future existence, and that we are but, as it were, in a stranger's home. Were our dwelling only in this world, we could have no idea or desire of any other being or satisfaction; so as that cannot in justice be wanting to the most excellent creature, which is not to the most inferior of them. *Doth God care for oxen?* Have not all their senses, that which even gluts them, whilst the rational Soul is no more contented than was Alexander with all the world. Other creatures are carried regularly and by instinct to the end they seek, but so is not man: he finds not his sovereign good here. So true is that of St. Augustine, "Fecisti nos ad Te, et inquietum est cor nostrum, donec requiescat in Te."[2]

It is the weight of this body of ours, depressing and sinking the soul into matter, makes it so difficult to emerge; but then she is illustrious, when, withdrawing

[1] Tuscul.

[2] "Thou hast made us for Thyself, and restless is our heart until it find rest in Thee." Confessions, lib. i., c. i.

herself from this low converse, she shakes her fetters off, abdicates the senses, and, by a kind of anticipation, quits the lump of body before their natural dissolution; and she returns to her own substance when she returns to virtue.

This recess, and how to profit by it—ah, how delicious! how charming! When I consider the sacred pledge of a soul, concredited, as she is, by God to every man, and who expects he should return her Him again, pure and immaculate as He gave it her! What shall we say, when he finds her so deformed, so ugly, unclean, and unlike what she was, as to profess He knows her not? What excuse for the unfaithfulness of our trust, the vices contracted, and that from so noble and generous a stock, so celestial a race? That this daughter of God and sister of angels, capable of infinite happiness, should lose her birthright, be ejected from her native country, and made miserable to eternity! How has such a soul cause to reproach one, that, being of so free and ingenuous a nature, we should confine her to a sordid dungeon; bring her into such abandoned company, and never give her breath, or suffer her to act like herself, to trim and prune her wings! Contemplate from whence she came, and whither she should go! How may she not execrate and curse the flesh, that made her such a drudge; and that, when marriageable to an empire bigger than all the world, she has been betrayed to a poor and wretched lazar![1] When she

[1] Of this vassalage of the soul, see Plato's *Phædo*, and Dr. Stillingfleet (*Orig. Sac.*, l. iii, c. 3., § 17).

might have been learned, knowing, pure, and full of light, we have brought her up in ignorance, and put out her very eyes! When she was designed the happiest of all created beings, we have reduced her to this misery! But thus the lovely bride, this innocent and spotless virgin, is no sooner born, but see how she is bestowed! The living is bound to the dead; the clean and pure to a sordid and ulcerous companion! For, why else so low-spirited, so soon in wrath at every trifle; so fearful, jealous, and diffident, proud and covetous, voluptuous and vain? In a word, why do we lie in all this ordure and inactive sloth, when there is a kingdom before us, mansions of bliss, and the journey yet so short, so easy, so delightful?

But from this, and a thousand deaths besides, she only can be freed by breaking her prison-doors; not of the body, those walls of flesh, that environ her, but of the vices she has contracted, which is the Centaur that detains her in the labyrinth. On the other side, if so she have behaved herself, as by resisting the violence offered her, to recover her native freedom, and, emancipated from the tyranny she had been under, resume her virtue, she is immediately joined in second nuptials to a choice and glorious condition, where she now dwells no longer under subjection; but, being arbitress of her own happiness, and reinforced with uncontrollable powers, is able to vanquish all assaults, allay and charm those perturbations, that the slavish and mutinous passions at any time insolently raise against her. She controls inclinations, composes the lower appetites,

withdraws incentives, moderates and coerces whatever she finds exorbitant, and acts the part of a wise and sovereign princess, and sits like a queen indeed: *Et præstò est Domina omnium et Regina ratio,* as the orator has described her.[1]

In a word, her government is natural and easy, and she becomes as happy, even in this life, as is consistent with the exercise of the noblest graces; presiding, as she does, like a supreme and universal monarch; and she steadily guides the reins, and enjoys a sweet and peaceful dominion, unless she suffer herself to be again corrupted by the fatal charms of a wanton prosperity, become remiss, slack her hand, and let fall the sceptre out of it; or that she meanly resign, make faint resistance, betray her trust, and, basely surrendering her title, consent to her own deposition. So true is that, *Facilè domabit cuncta, qui menti imperat.*[2]

But the rules and *arcana* of this polity[3] are not to be learned from the trivial usages and institutions of men, but from the Divine Oracles, and the mysteries of religion, the aids of reason, our conversation with practical virtue, (not feigned and theatrical) the exercises of habitual graces, and a purgative life. And thus a soul, by careful discipline, recovers herself, by original justice, inflexible honesty, and by what is true and really good; upon which there succeeds a certain heroical celsitude

[1] See this incomparably described in Cicero, Tusc., 1.

[2] "He will subdue all things easily, who has the mastery of self." See Prov., xvi., 32.

[3] Tertull. de Anim., c. 4.

and serenity of mind, joys intellectual, and, in sum, a felicity the most consummate attainable in this life, because it is the life of God, and an antepast of Heaven. And this, the upper man, and noble soul, may attain to here; but then he must be vigilant, go continually armed, and be ready to encounter every thought and imagination of reluctant sense, and the first prolusions of the enemy. He must stand upon the guard, and examine all that passes, and, finding himself too weak at any time, call for aid from above. Let us hear the devout Simplicius,[1] though a Heathen:

"Oh, blessed fountain of light and immortality! who, to form us after thine own image, hast impressed on us that glorious character, an immortal soul; whose descent, being from Thee, has no superior but Thee, and is enriched with such transcendent faculties to think, discern, resolve, and, by thine Omnipotent aid and our endeavours, to pursue that which is best and most agreeable to the dignity of our being: let, oh! let not that emanation from Thee, given to be the conductress of our life, and guide to supernal mansions, be so immersed in sensual and brutish appetites, as, by yielding to the least of them, to sully that bright and illustrious mirror, which is the reflection of Thy resplendent face, or lose the prerogative with which we are invested. Clear, more and more, the entanglements of our understanding: dissipate the mists which our depraved affections benight us in; emancipate us of those weights which depress the nobler faculties, that, delivered from this

[1] Simplic. Comm. in Epictet. Enchir., cap. lxxix.

prison, freed of these ponderous chains, we may no more lie under the tyranny of our deadly enemies, the prejudices of custom, superstition, popular delusion, the love of pleasure, and the fugitive satisfactions of sense: but discerning the bright and glorious beam, from whence the soul enkindled aspires to be re-united, we may ascend the celestial tower, and cast down these usurpers, scatter the impostures, and at once shake off those impediments, which, through our sad and deplorable weaknesses, have hitherto prevented us; and the resplendent virtues of peace, justice, humility, charity, all the virtues, all the graces, with an inflamed zeal be again revived in souls devoted to Thy service."

It is the lower man, which, seeking to gratify and indulge its ally, the sense, is perpetually caressing it with objects which fascinate and deprave it; as more agreeable to it than what reason suggests, because the senses are gross and palpable. It is this which interposes the enmity between the flesh and the spirit, the brute and the man in us—disturbs the government, and mars the image of God's vicegerent, or rather the little Deity within us. Let us hear the devout Granada,[1] resembling the human soul to her Divine Creator in substance, essence, understanding, and operation. "She neither eats," says he, "nor drinks, sleeps, nor is visible; she is immaterial, and in every individual simple and but one: God is a spirit—so is the soul; invisible—the

[1] "El Amor de Dios" — a Dominican, one of the greatest ascetic writers of Spain, born in 1505. See Nicolas, *Bibliothec. Hisp. Biog. Univer.*

soul is so; immortal—so is she: God is an Intellectual Spirit—so is the soul; has freedom of will—she has the like: God is holy, just, and good, and so would the soul be, too, but for the Tempter; nor is she, for all this, without some footsteps and traces of those virtues. And as to her essence and operations, God is simple, indivisible, and so is the soul: He is all in all, gives being to all, and, being but one, operates in all. In like manner, is the soul but one, simple, indivisible, and spiritual, working all those different motions in the little world, our bodies; giving form, being, life, to all the functions, senses, organs, in ten thousand different offices; so as, albeit angels may more peculiarly resemble their Maker, because, being peculiarly spiritual, they have no commerce with bodies; yet, considering the several operations of the soul in the body, she seems, in truth, to be more like Him than are those glorious messengers themselves, and is His only representative here below."

Indeed, God alone is infinite and eternal in all acceptations, having neither beginning nor end of days; but so is not the soul, unless as to its capacities of duration, and manner of understanding; forasmuch as there is nothing capable to fill and satiate her but God Himself, in whom only is all fulness; and she still desires to know and to learn more; so that in the soul of man there is an infinite faculty, which would have no end or limit even in this life, did not death interpose, and put a period to her external operations: the internal never die.

CONTINUATION.

Thus, is the soul the type and lively character of her blessed Maker; not as rational only, or of mutual faculties and substance, in which many vile and profligate men, who pervert their faculties, dedecorate and pollute themselves, (becoming rather so many images of the devil) frequently exceed the best of men; but in her rectitude and pursuit of virtue, justice, fortitude, temperance, meekness, charity, and as she is supernaturally enlightened.[1] So, indeed, the understanding, will, conscience, or intellectual recorder, renders us, like our Creator, symbolical of a kind of Trinity. "She will deserve eternal life," says Lactantius, "if she betray not the succours which reason offers, and which God has reserved to assist her; she can and may vindicate her dominion, maintain her empire, and oft has freed herself from those usurpers, escaped the inescations of sense, and reduced her vassals to obedience.[2]" And yet these dangerous enemies, the objects of our senses, and consequently of our passions and affections, are not altogether to be abandoned and quite obliterated. They should not, I say, be quite extinguished, but are hugely

[1] Gal., v., 13-26; Ephes., iv., 24; James, iii., 17, 18.

[2] "Qui si delicatus magis ac tener in hâc vitâ fuerit, quàm ratio ejus exposcit; si, virtute contemptâ, desideriis se cariùs addixerit, cadet et premetur in terram. Sin autem, ut debet, statum suum, quem rectum sortitus est, promtè constanterque defenderit; si, terræ, quam calcare ac vincere debet, non servierit; vitam merebitur sempiternam.—Lactant. De Opif. Dei, c. 19.

useful to exercise and prove us; yea, and may be qualified, as far as is necessary, for the support of life and the comfortable fruitions of it; since, being no other than the motions of the soul herself, inciting us to laudable and worthy actions, they come to be perverted only by being too much caressed and indulged. We are not, therefore, to blame our appetites, or passions, which God has ordained to be the *scenes* of our obedience, and as being but the natural effects of that animal spirit in our bodies from external objects; but strive and endeavour that we do not over-cherish their emotions and solicitudes, in our wills and fancies, till they become exorbitant and unreasonable, or judge and determine of things through those false and delusory optics. For the soul does not so necessarily sympathize with the body, as that she cannot forbear these indulgences. No passion can compel the will, without our own consent. The immediate obsequiousness of the body to the will shows, rather, that the motions of the mind are no way mechanical, but a more noble, distinct, and incorporeal principle. The power of the understanding over the will, is to regulate only; nor can the will, refractory and mutinous as it often is, or our passions, rebellious as they are, knowingly and sedately wish for what is destructive of their good; unless our present impatience of being satisfied for the time deprave our natures, and men obstinately stop their ears, connive and shut their eyes, and will not seriously consider, nor act like understanding and reasonable creatures, to examine and discuss things impartially, curb

and moderate, yea, crucify their inclinations. For the human Soul acts as the will disposes, and *that*, as the understanding prompts.

Wherefore, our care must be to rectify the intellectual faculty, and that it resign not to appetite; that perverse will become not vicious, and the vice, custom, and that induce necessity: that, as the wise man advises,[1] we give the water no passage, that evil enter not the first door of sense, eye, or ear, touch, or taste; nor the second one, of fancy; nor the third, of understanding; nor the fourth, of the will; lest it break forth into act, and one act produce two, and that a third, and it become habitual, and double to infinite; and, in fine, obliterate the very principles of nature, and debase us below the vilest animal. We may be angry, provided we sin not, nor let more of the passion loose than what is just, and adequate to the offence: but it should never be such as to proceed to rage, and irreconcileable reproaches, or *let the sun go down upon our wrath:* that, as we are advised, our fears betray not the succour which reason offers, or by rendering us too remiss, when upon a good and brave occasion it imports us to bear up. And so of the rest of the irascible and concupiscibles, reason and religion should hold the reins. *Remember this, and show ourselves men;*[2] that is, do manly things, and not to let our passions loose, like untamed beasts; not be lions in our own houses, furious, morose, peevish, snarling and worrying

[1] Ecclus., xxv., 25. [2] Isaiah, xlvi., 8.

upon any slight occasion; nor be thorns and briars to all that come near us, and thwart our inclinations.

The mind, says our noble Verulam,[1] has that empire over the body which the Lord has over his vassals; but our reason over our passions, that command which a magistrate has over citizens, which should be gentle, benign, easy, and discreet. St. Augustine,[2] I remember, strangely wonders at the folly of men, so desirous of knowing other things, before they learn to know themselves. What pride, what passion, what envy and malice, lust and avarice, in a word, what dens of wild and unclean beasts should we discover in our own bosoms! Verily, passions always are and ever will be in us, and so they should; but it is not convenient they shall always be in action, though always in a readiness: like well-disciplined soldiers, they should always stand in their ranks and files, and know how to handle their arms, but *be content with their pay, and do violence to no man*, till led on by an experienced commander, and when the cause is just; and then they are for defence, and to guard, not to injure ourselves or others. They are subjects, not sovereigns, and must be kept in obedience, lest they dethrone their superior; and when they rise in tumult, they are to be suppressed and reduced to order again.

Thus regulated and employed on worldly objects, there is not a passion but is highly useful. When, for instance, our love is placed on virtue, and the sovereign Good, which is God, our hatred and aversion against base

[1] Bacon's Instaur. Magna, l. 5. [2] Confess., lib. 10.

and unworthy things, our grief and regret for our own defects and follies, and so of the rest. For a wise man should not be without his passions, but above them. Our great Example was so; and those who will be happy must be so, when they feel them stirring, hold in the bit, and never suffer the beast to ride away with the man, but keep a steady hand, regulated and free from excess; for so did our Lord and Master; and therefore have divines called them *propassions*. He bounded them with reason, and suffered them hardly to go a little forward, when He scourged the sacrilegious profaners of the Temple.[1] For passions, which with the Pathomyotomists are, as it were, the muscles of the soul, are like the winds; they serve to swell and fill the sails, and urge and move us forwards. Nothing more useful, while they gently breathe, nothing more benign: but, when once they estuate, grow high and impetuous, they raise the billows into mountains, toss and submerge the vessel. An angry man shall never want woe; like fire and water, they are excellent servants, but cruel masters. Nothing is more profitable, whilst kept within the chimney and the channel; but, when once they grow too big for the one, or bear down the banks of the other, and get dominion, they take hold of the house, and overflow the country, and a dreadful conflagration and ruin follows.

Nor are we, for all this, to complain of nature, as if dealing hardly and unkindly with us, in rendering us susceptible of these impressions, and obnoxious to the

[1] S. John, ii., 13.

rage of such unruly monsters, the dangers and errors to which we are exposed: since, as we showed, all our corporeal motions are sensated by the soul, and she can give check or liberty, control and curb them at pleasure; which is to me a kind of demonstration of her independence from the body, and a manifest conviction that God has inspired it, and furnished us with such aids against their rude and sudden incursions, as needs nothing save our own endeavours and resolutions, co-operating with a grace which is always ready to assist us; but without which all the *right reason* the Socinians and others glory in will hardly entitle us to what we have lost, or take out the spot which has tainted us: so impetuously are we hurried to our own destruction, and to coveting the forbidden fruit.

Besides, He has placed her in this station, that man being a voluntary and intellectual agent and arbiter of his actions, when we shall have given proof and argument of virtue, He may remunerate with the more noble reward: and pronouncing us capable of higher felicity, communicate to us Himself, which is the sum of happiness. For upon this account the great Apostle[1] describes to us what pleasure he took in infirmities, in necessities, and distresses, and that when he was weak, then he was strong, as having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, &c. It is for this we are bid to love our enemies, to bless them who curse us, pray for those who persecute us; to turn the other cheek, go the

[1] II. Cor., xii., 6, 10.

other furlong: in a word, not to render evil for evil, but to overcome evil with good.

What an important and highly necessary thing, then, it is, that man should know himself, and the dignity of that heaven-born inmate, his immortal soul! When the wise man said, "Know thyself," (says Cicero) he bid thee know thy soul.[1] And the Poet—

Ne te quæsiveris extra.

Seek not thyself without thyself. It is like travelling other countries and foreign kingdoms, before we have seen any thing of our own.

Man is the whole world's compendium: and though his body be elementary, kneaded of a handful of refined dust, his soul is ethereal, incorruptible, and immortal. He is nature's great miracle, the divine epitome of the creation, and the richest furniture of both worlds, this and that to come: fitted and prepared for the highest favours, to converse with angels, and, being purified by virtue, to be taken into the bosom of his Maker,[2] freed from error, ignorance, impetuous loves, human passions, and infirmities, and that all his delights are chaste, rational, godlike, endless.

What, oh, what shall I call thee, O, illustrious particle, but a ray of the Divine Light itself!

——divinæ particulam auræ;[3]

[1] Cum igitur dicit, nosce te, hoc dicit, nosce animum tuum.—Cic. Tusc., 1.

[2] Οὕτω μὲν ἔχουσα, εἰς τὸ ὅμοιον αὐτῇ τὸ θεῖον ἀπέρχεται, τὸ θεῖον τε καὶ ἀθάνατον, καὶ φρονίμον.—Plato's *Phædo*.

[3] Hor., Sat., lib. ii., 79.

(not to say a decision from the godlike substance, as Philo platonizes a little too boldly) all but a spark of His incommunicable essence. For so the orator, and, with becoming veneration, *Humanus animus, decerptus ex mente divinâ cum alio nullo, nisi cum ipso Deo (si fas est dictu) comparari potest.*[1] Not by any substantial or real emanation, which were indeed bold to assert; but, as she is immortal, spiritual, and intellectual—perfections in God transcendent, in man by way of signature and idea only; or, as the Apostle himself,[2] as well as the poet of near alliance with him—

> Τοῦ γὰρ καὶ γένος ἐσμέν.
> "For we are his offspring."

And hadst thou been, my soul, of meaner extraction, how couldst thou have been the object of such a Saviour, and such a love? As, rather than He would not make thee happy, when He saw thee so miserable, betrayed and captivated by thy senses, would Himself descend, become incarnate, palpable, and obvious to our sense. And this body and this nature (of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting) has He exalted, that, being lifted up, He might draw all men to Him.

But, alas! when all is done, in such a dungeon does this precious jewel of ours lie, that she neither discerns nor is sensible of her own operations; no, nor how the body itself, her domicile here, is built. She knows not

[1] "The human soul, as it is an emanation from the Divine mind, can be compared with nothing else (I speak reverently) but with God Himself."—Cic., Tusc., lib. v.

[2] Acts, xvii., 28; Aratus.

what gave the first motion to the first moved, the heart; and whether now we move by the spirits in the intercurrent nerves, the heart, or blood, or by what other family. In short, "that a soul we have we know, but what, where, whence she is, we cannot tell."[1] And though we only live by breath, we neither know how nor why we breathe: so as after two of the most sagacious persons of our age[2] (or perhaps of any other) have spent volumes on the subject, treating of the use of respiration only, they have ingenuously acknowledged it a hopeless search![3]

> Prô superi, quantum mortalia pectora cæcæ
> Noctis habent.....[4]

We know not the very principles by which we live, nor where we dwell, nor what we do, nor are. But, when we shall be freed from these impediments, it is then we shall be happy, indeed;[5] it is then the soul shall

[1] Animum habere nos scimus; quid sit animus, ubi sit, qualis sit, et unde, nescimus.—Sen., *Ep.*, 121.

[2] [He names only one; the other, probably, is his friend, the celebrated *Boyle*, in one of whose works (*Physico-Mechan.*, E. x.) there is an article upon the use and process of *Respiration*, which concludes with the following quotation from St. Augustine—"Magis eligo cautam ignorantiam confiteri, quàm falsam scientiam profiteri.]

[3] Advocent in consilium omnes ingenii viros, quotquot sese naturæ consultos arbitrantur, sudabunt scio plus satis, priusquàm verum respirationis usum invenerint.—Dr. Ent. *Antid.*, *De usu. Resp.*, p. 143.

[4] "Ye Gods! What thick, involving darkness blinds
The stupid faculties of mortal minds!"—Picart.
Ovid, Met., lib. iv., 472.

[5] Cic. Tusc., lib. 1.

know and be known; and whether the seeds of all sciences, knowledge, and reason, were inherent in pre-existency, which are now excited and stirred up to act, by the suggestion, ministry, and retrievement of the senses; and whether we now recal things only to memory, which we knew before: it being more than probable, that the soul in separation, and departing hence, carries away all her innate and acquired notions, and it is certain, receives also higher and more sublime ones.

REFLECTIONS.

We shall then contemplate the universe in its archetype; namely, the intellectual world, in the Divine mind; in which dwell all the forms and exemplars of all that has been, is, or shall be, in the angelical, elementary, great, and little world; the substance, quiddity, and essence of everything; the prime and proximate matter of all the species and kinds of beings, together with the form and principle of motion in everything. Nay, (and in comparison of which, all this knowledge is yet but ignorance) even to the full of our most enlarged desires, the Divine decrees themselves, immortality and infinity; the unexplicable, adorable Trinity, and hypostatical union,[1] and other recondite mysteries of our most holy religion. There it is (to speak with a devout person,)[2] the records of eternity shall be exposed to view; when we shall discover upon what apt junctures and admirable dependences of things so perplexed, cross, and mysterious to our shallow reasonings, the designs of

[1] See Pet. du Moulin. De Cognit. Dei. [2] Mr. Howe.

them were laid: when in that mirror, that *Speculum Æternitatis*, we shall see all that truth, the knowledge whereof can be any ways grateful to our nature; and in his light see light; and by that light all those vast treasures of knowledge and wisdom shall lie open, without enclosure, and the most voluptuous epicurism, in reference to it, become innocent. Where there shall be neither lust, nor forbidden fruit; no prohibition of desirable knowledge, no affectation of undesirable. When we shall trace all those rivulets which successively pass by us here in petty streams, to the wide ocean, and the glimmering beams of light to the fountain of light itself. In sum, when the pleasure of speculation shall be without the toil, and that maxim eternally antiquated, that "Increase of knowledge increases sorrow."

Oh, how charming a scene will it be to behold whence the vast frame of all nature sprung! what stretched out the interminable expanse, planted the pillars of the poised earth, and turned the mighty wheels of Providence through all succession of time! What that arm, which holds the spirits of darkness in adamantine chains, and checks the rage of tyrannous princes, and the tumults of restless and ungovernable multitudes, that the few virtuous and dear to Heaven be not made a prey! How delightful will be the contemplation of comprehending all the possible effects of the Supreme Power, as far as a glorified creature can dive, or desire to dive into infinity! To have a prospect of the innumerable creatures in the creative power of the Almighty! Nor less to consider what has re-

strained its full exertion, and that uncontrolled justice, that it did not at once avenge itself on the contumacious, and turn the whole world of sinners into ruin and desolation.

What a happy state, when all our doubts shall be solved, all our infirmities healed, all our senses unbound, all our faculties inspirited with new vigour! A scene of love and fruitions opened all about us, and letting us into the heart, where the noble thoughts of that love dwelt from eternity, which made the great and consummately happy God become a man of sorrows, and the Deity to be clad in human flesh! Eternity to become the birth of time, and the Son of the Most High to pitch his tabernacle among mortal men! In a word, (O, stupendous!) to teach, reduce, and restore sinful creatures, and conduct them to supernal happiness; redeem lost and miserable dust with the blood of God! And that God to embrace a painful and shameful cross; become a victim to incensed justice—a spectacle to angels and men!

Nor all this by transient and superficial knowledge, figures, and umbrations, but immediate and intuitive notices; nor longer by mediation of species, nor confusedly in universals; but distinctly, properly, and by their essential definitions. Our knowledge will then, I say, be perfect, without need of art and reasoning; as being itself a perpetual ratiocination, such as that of God and holy angels; penetrating at once the universal nature of things, and beholding in their causes things which cannot be known but by exercise and habits, experience, comparing, time, succession, and by degrees;

and, after all this labour, but imperfectly; which are all defects separated souls are exempt of.

In the life to come, when the capacity of every sense and faculty shall be improved to the utmost, and no object to interpose or present itself, but such as is capable to afford an entire and distinct satisfaction and complacency. It is then that, cleared of all suffusion, we shall contemplate that fulness, which can only satiate without satiety. Finally, it is there (and verily, for which I more ardently thirst after it) that we shall be restored to the enjoyment of our departed friends, holy and excellent persons, whom as our lives we have loved. The contemplation of this made the orator, in the person of Cato, profess that, old as he was, he would not accept of longer life, and become young again, in assurance of shortly seeing and enjoying the delights of another world.[1]

If thus a Heathen was so transported with hopes of seeing again those heroes and worthy men, famous for their noble actions and moral virtues, and of which they had yet but conjectures only; how should we Christians languish after the fruition of that blessed state, the vision of God himself, the glorified body of our lovely Jesus, the city of the living God, the celestial Jerusalem; the innumerable host of angels, spirits of

[1] Oh! præclarum diem, cum ad illud divinum animorum concilium cætumque proficiscar, et cum ex hâc turbâ et colluvione discedam. (Cic. De Sen.)—"O, glorious day, when I shall set out to join that goodly council and assemblage of spirits, and quit for ever this grovelling scene of turmoil and defilement!"

just men made perfect;[1] all our excellent friends, dear children, relations, and acquaintances; all those great and admirable persons, of whom the world was not worthy, and we have heard such glorious things, joining with Moses in his Song, with David in his Psalms, with all the saints and celestial hierarchy, in perpetual jubilation and hallelujahs! O! happy day, when, divested into spirit, and set on shore in that invisible continent, we shall repose in the sedate and tranquil ether; see through the curtains of matter new and surprising scenes and ideas, beyond the limits of finite beings.

Why, then, do we any longer perplex and betoil ourselves in macerating studies, and labour in the fire about any thing but this *one thing needful* to put us into this happy state, and conduct us into the peaceful harbour! Methinks, with Cleombrotus, (reading Plato's Phædo) we should almost be impatient of life; or, rather, with the apostle, (who had been rapt into the third heaven, saw and heard what he could not describe and utter) *desire to be dissolved*,[2] which were best of all; and, in the mean time, be daily advancing in virtue, till we are in some degree refined from the dross and sulliage[3] of our former lives' incursions, and gotten as near the top of Olympus as we can do in the circumstances of this mortal condition.

Who would not with a glorious ambition aspire to this perfection, and strive to qualify himself for this apotheosis, this advantageous exchange, where, enlarged

[1] Heb. xii., 22, 23.

[2] Phil., i., 23.

[3] Cic. Tusc.

from her narrow confinement, our souls shall no longer remain obnoxious to her treacherous flesh and rebellious passions, nor ratiocinate and grow knowing by little parcels and pittances, tedious elucubrations, the auxiliaries of erroneous senses and material images: but, (as Seneca[1] introduces the father of Marcia, showing her deceased son, Metellus, the singularities of the other world) the soul shall emerge as out of sleep, and break forth of this dismal cloud; intuitively, nakedly, purely, in one instant, be put into full possession of all that the Soul can desire;[2] and know, and comprehend herself entirely; which, whilst from her we derive all we know, or comprehend of all things else, is the only thing that she herself nor knows nor comprehends.

O, wonder of wonders, that the soul should be light, and nothing more common, more perspicuous than light; yet nothing more obscure, more dark! And that *that* which shows us all things else, should conceal herself! That which is within, without, and all about us, should be invisible;[3] so as we see not what we see! Who that has a spark of generous emulation, I say, would endure that the most evident of things, and the most important, too, should continue thus dark and concealed? That *that* by which we see, move, discourse, and perform all our actions—nay, by which we are and exist—we should

[1] Consolat. ad Marciam., c. xxv. [2] Tertull. de Anim., c. 53.

[3] "Αυτη δὲ μόνη οὔτε παροῦσα, οὔτε ἀπιοῦσα ὁρᾶται. — *Xenoph. Cyrop.*, l. 8.

"Animus autem solus, nec quum adest, nec quum discedit, apparet."—*Cic. de Senect.*

be stark blind to, and ignorant of? But so it has pleased our Maker, to mortify our pride and vanity, whilst grovelling here below, and immersed in sensual pleasures, we tread not the paths of those virtues and dispositions which lead us to it, and neglect to know ourselves. Ah! my soul, how fain would I be once acquainted with thee, with whom I thus continually converse, yet neither see, nor know, nor hear; whilst yet I feel, and hear, and see thee by effects! That I might know but what thou art, by whom I am, for whom I live, and where thou dwellest, who art so near, and yet so far from me![1]

Shortly, shortly the curtain will be drawn, the mist be dissipated, and day appear; Then shall the glorious scene be opened, the Bride descend,[2] when I shall see[3] and know Thee fully, and enjoy thee for ever, and Him who made thee, and gave thee to me! Methinks I behold (as the eloquent Father[4] describes it) how the soul, finding herself unfettered and at large, she trims and spreads her plumes for the celestial flight, and wondering at her escape, as awakened out of a dismal dream, and delivered rather from a hideous tempest, she finds herself on the banks of Elysium, feels a new spring of life within her, an unconfined light about her, new comprehensions and capacities; and for a while admiring from whence she came, what she is, ravished at her own felicity, and overcome with joy, dissolves

[1] Lactant. De Opif. Dei, c. 6. [2] Rev., xxi., 2.
[3] I. Cor., xiii., 12. [4] Tertull. de Anim., c. 53.

into the praises of her Liberator! Would not seriously the imagination almost transport one?

O, Thou, most high, prime, and super-excellent nature, who art All things, and in All; by whom all things live, move, and have their existence; whose instruments all agents are—wherever Thou art, who everywhere art, Thou art all things, and canst do all things. If Thou art anything at all, and not rather the Cause and Being of all, if at all Thou be a Cause. Whatever Thou art, Thou art Infallible; and we know not what name to give Thee but Perfection and Goodness. And Thou who art good, art all good, and all things are good in Thee. Thou art Thine own wisdom, Thine own power, Thine own consummate happiness! Thou, O Thou, who art all this, teach us to comprehend Thee beyond those speculations, and intellectual gazings on Thine astonishing perfections, by such influxes, as filling us with divine and supernal qualities, may exalt our faculties beyond their natural power, and bring them into an assimilation and conformity to the most accomplished idea of Thy goodness, together with an inward sensation of their effects. O, Thou, who canst do all this, and more than we can comprehend, ask, or think, enter into us, illustrate our understanding, instruct our ignorance, and teach us to know Thee, and by Thee, ourselves.

For it is not enough for a brave and heroic mind to live so as to merit no reproof of others, or of ourselves; but that we strive to add more lustre, brightness, and

perfection to the soul; that we purify, and render it fit for its reception into the superior mansions and friendship of heaven, by acts, I say, of virtue, and extraordinary gallantry. I tell you, (says Seneca) betwixt God and good men, there is a friendship—friendship, do I call it? yea, an intimate acquaintance.[1]

In this interim, then, we should sometimes withdraw and ananchorize ourselves[2] to enjoy those pure and abstracted delights.[3] There is no climbing up to the knowledge of God, or of ourselves, but by contemplation of what most resembles Him, and is nearest to Him—our immortal souls, purified by a holy life, which is the God within us. We should take off our affections from union and adhesion to false appearances, cement and fasten them to solid and worthy things, from whence our appetites and violent passions may have broken them off. Verily, the recess is highly necessary, and that we now and then, I say, suspend our cogitations from sensual and material objects,[4] check and recall our thoughts, and, directed by the light within, introvert our contemplations, act with freedom: and we may ask her counsel and assistance, and hear her speak, without disturbance and impertinent avocations.

[1] Inter bonos viros ac Deum amicitia est; amicitiam dico? imò etiam necessitudo.—*De pruden.*, cap. 21.

[2] Magni est autem ingenii revocare mentem à sensibus.—*Cic. Tusc.*, l. 1.

[3] Apices animæ.

[4] See this excellently described by Plotinus, l. 6, c. 5.

This, this alone is the only way to know our souls, and ourselves, and how we differ from other creatures. By this we shall be able to discover that the body is scarce an essential part of man, and that the material and perishing substance can never comprehend[1] what is immaterial and perdurable. She will sweetly charm all the perturbations that surround us here, transport and carry us beyond the sphere of sense, and entertain us, not with these Socratic discourses, but with new *Illapses* and discoveries of indeed another world, nearer hand, yet richer than Peru and both the Indies. And, though she be still encompassed with this dusky cloud, so as we yet see but through a glass darkly, we may perceive some glimmerings of light, how bright and charming she is within, and what a paradisian day is purpling the hills, which even through this tinsel veil of flesh shall shortly be removed, and the horizon cleared —when the sensible powers shall be refined and spiritualized, and the soul be on the wing to the mansions of repose and bliss.[2] It is a noble contemplation, and sign of a great and heroic mind to be breathing after the separate state. Lord, to behold Thee in glory, is to be transformed into it; to contemplate Thy divine excellency, is to become Thy illustrious image; to know Thee by distinct perception, and Thy works by irradiation of Thy brightness, will then be imparted to us, when we shall at once become wise, holy, vastly knowing,

[1] See St. Augustine's description of *The City of God*, l. 22, c. 30. *Erit ergò illius civitatis*, &c.

[2] See Seneca, Consol. ad Marc., c. 24.

self-satisfied, and perfect beyond the perfection of creatures in their highest excellency! In union with Thee we shall have nothing to wish, nothing to seek, or further to desire! Our services of Thee will be still new pleasure, and such tides of fresh additions to our satisfactions and intellectual joys, as at once will actuate us with a vigour able to converse with Deity itself, and enlarge our capacities to comprehend Him, who is Incomprehensible.

Let us hear the excellent stoic: "Through the interval of infancy and age, as from another womb, we hasten and speed away to another Birth and Original. Another state of things expects us."[1] And, a little after, "Shortly, very shortly Thou shalt behold all the mysteries of nature, this darkness shall be discussed, and Thou encircled with a glorious lustre," &c.[2]

These are real things, and great, to which the most sagacious and intelligent brutes pretend not. Their impressions come altogether from without, are fluid and transient, and therefore quickly vanish: nor can they recollect or think abstractedly, and of this future state of retribution, intellectual life and glory; on which is founded all that can render our condition considerably different from, or better than that of beasts; environed, as we are, with such restless passions, unsatisfiable appetites, the accidents and anxieties of an umbratile life:

[1] Per hoc spatium quod ab infantiâ patet in senectutem, in alium maturescimus partum. Alia origo nos expectat, alius rerum status, &c.

[2] Aliquando naturæ tibi arcana retegentur; discutietur ista caligo, et lux undique clara percutiet.—*Sen.*, *Ep.*, 102.

so as, if in this alone we have all our hopes, we are indeed of all creatures the most miserable[1].

"For to what purpose was I born at all, and should rejoice to have been among the number of the living? What! to be a passage for our meat and drink?—to cram this frail and fluid carcase, which must shortly perish (unless it every foot be gorged), and live a slave to sickness, and the dread of death, to which we are all obnoxious? Take once from life but this inestimable good, and it is not worth the sweat and labour we bestow upon it. Oh! how contemptible a thing is man, unless he raise himself above humanity!" So Seneca.[2] "If thy soul, whatever she is, perish and dissolve with the body, I cannot see in what they are to be esteemed blessed, who, having never attained any reward of their virtue, haply, have even perished for virtue's sake."[3]

In sad earnest, if we have no farther prospect than this miserable being here, whatever circumstances of health, youth, riches, fame, beauty, and the inferior pleasures of brutish sense, may seem to alleviate the hastening and fatal period; or that there be no life and

[1] I. Cor., xv. 19.

[2] Quid enim erat cur in numero viventium me positum esse gauderem? An ut cibos et potum percolarem? ut hoc corpus casurum ac fluidum periturumque, nisi subinde impleatur, sarcirem, et viverem ægri minister? ut mortem timerem, cui omnes nascimur? Detrahe hox inæstimable bonum; non est vita tanti, ut sudem, ut æstuem. Oh! quàm contempta res est homo, nisi supra humana se erexerit! Sen. Nat. Quæst., l. i., Præf.

[3] Ἐι μὲν ἅμα τοῖς σώμασι διαλυομένοις, καὶ τὸ τῆς ψυχῆς, ὁτιδήποτε ἔστιν, ἐκεῖνο συνδιαλύεται, &c.—*Dion. Halicar. Aul. Rom.*, l. 8.

retributions hereafter, nor no soul worth looking after, but that which is common to other creatures;—I must confess (with Dr. More)[1] it seems almost indifferent whether any creature *be*, or no. Nor should I (with dying Plato) thank my Genius for being a man, for my country, birth, education, fortune, or that I was born when so many wise men flourished. For, what is it to have lived *seventy years*, wherein we have been dead, or worse than dead, above two-third parts of them? Sleep, youth, age, and diseases, with a number of poor and contemptible employments, swallow up at least so great a portion, that as good, if not better is he, that never was, than he that is, that hath but such a grace or glimpse of passing life to mock him.

There can, therefore, be in God no design in making of this world, which will prove worthy of so excellent a goodness and wisdom, but the trial and probation of man's immortal soul, which seems the deepest reach of His counsel in the Creation; and the life of this world but a prelude to one of longer duration, and larger circumference hereafter. And surely, as we have showed, it is nothing else but the heavy load of this body[2] that weighs down the mind from reaching to those supernal hopes, that we may not say from a certain sense and perception of that undisturbed state of Immortality.

But if a man's soul be once sunk by evil fate or demerit from a sense of this high and eternal truth into that cold conceit, that the Original of All things does lie either in shuffling chance, or in the stark roots of

[1] Philos. Poem Interp. Gen. 43-5. [2] Wisd., ix., 15.

unknowing nature and brute necessity; and that there is nothing of extraordinary and divine, which discriminates men from other creatures, besides their mechanism; all the subtile chords of Reason, without the timely recovery of that Divine touch within the hidden spirit of man, will never be able to reduce and pull him back out of that dreadful pit of Atheism and Infidelity. So much better is innocence and piety, than subtle argument, and earnest and sincere devotion, than curious disputes.

Da Pater augustam menti conscendere sedem,
Da fontem lustrare boni, da luce repertâ
In Te conspicuos animi defigere visus:
Discute terrenæ nebulas et pondera molis,
Atque tuo splendore mica: Tu namque Serenum;
Tu requies tranquilla piis: Te cernere Finis,
Principium, Victor, Dux, Semita, Terminus idem.[1]

Grant, then, Great God, our thoughts may reach thy throne,
Grant we the Fountain of all good may see;
Grant that this blissful Light to us once known,
We may for ever fix our eyes on Thee:
Dispel this darkness, and these clogs remove,
And let Thy beams appear. For Thou art light;
Thou art true rest, to those who do Thee love,
Beginning, End, both Way and Guide; the sight
Of Thee is all Thy creatures can desire,
'Tis *this* alone to which our souls aspire.

[1] Böeth., lib. iii., Met. 9.

CHAPTER IV.

SECTION I.

THAT IF THERE BE A GOD AND SOVEREIGN BEING, WHO CREATED ALL THINGS, HE IS TO BE ADORED AND OBEYED BY HIS CREATURES (ESPECIALLY BY MAN THE INTELLECTUAL) WITH RELIGIOUS WORSHIP; NOT ONLY AS HIS DUTY, BUT IN ORDER TO HIS FUTURE STATE AND FELICITY.

That we have in the former chapters hitherto extended our discourse so prolixly, none ought to wonder who shall duly consider the great importance of the subjects, The Existence of God, and His Works; especially as it more nearly concerns us, the immortal souls of man, for whose use and contemplation they were created in reference to his Maker's glory and His creatures' well-being. Since, that foundation steadily laid, the superstruction and consequences must undoubtedly stand, and remain unshaken; namely, that, since we can have no rational notion of The Deity, without supposing Him to be of absolute perfection; that He is benign, loving, bountiful, just, powerful, wise, holy, and transcendently all this, He is and ought to be adored, and absolutely obeyed by all His creatures, especially by man, whom He has more eminently endowed with reason and conscience of his duty, and

capacitated to understand the benefits and happiness which will accrue to him by it. For all perfections, such as are in Almighty God, must needs challenge the highest reverence and veneration.

It is certainly the greatest argument in the world that those who receive being from another should sincerely honour, serve, and obey that Being. Divine adorations and recognition must, of necessity, and from parity of reason, and nature of the thing, follow such high obligations. And therefore it is not enough to speak only of, and to know, His Godlike perfections, and be sensible of His goodness, and other attributes; but to consider what our duty is, and to express it in acts of obedience, worship, and gratitude for them. This is so natural and just, as even the very Heathen universally give their suffrages for it. Socrates, Plato, Cato, Cicero, Seneca, all the philosophers, are Christians in this point without dispute.

Si Deus est animus, est purâ mente colendus,[1]

even for the dignity of His nature, much more in regard of our relation to Him as His creatures. Let us hear how they speak the very sense, yea, the very words of the Scripture. If God be a Father, we must obey Him; if our Master, serve Him. Plato calls this in plain terms Religion towards God.[2] And so the Holy Prophet, If I be a Father, where is mine honour, &c.

[1] "If God is a Spirit, we must worship Him with a pure mind."

[2] Let any man read his *Epinomis*, Alexander Aphrodiseus to the same sense, and also Jamblicus, and generally all the Academics with their Master.

It were to swell a volume but to cite part even of their sentences upon this topic.[1] Histories of all nations, civil or barbarous, agreeing in this matter, who, for the worship of their gods, have built, endowed, and consecrated places, times, persons, altars, temples, and sacred rites, as not only books, but the yet remaining ruins of their many temples, and statues, inscriptions, and places of worship, proclaim; where they sometimes invoked their deities, sacrificed, prayed, performed their vows, deprecated punishments, returned thanks for benefits received, inquired after the will of their gods, and the responses of their oracles. For, if we believe that God is a rewarder of those who serve and obey Him (as we have proved He is, from the nature and effects of His attributes), the very love of ourselves would prompt us to implore the continuance of His favours and kindness to us, even in this life! And being convinced that it is in His power, not only to bless us here, but make us happy hereafter, would render us more devout, and solicitous to serve and please Him, and to give Him the worship of reasonable and intellectual creatures.

Fruition and the Supreme Good is doubtless the end of every wise and considering person. And our true felicity consisting in the favour of God, who is the bountiful Giver of all good, what should we not do to obtain the bliss and felicity He is able to bestow upon

[1] Quis non timeat omnia providentem et cogitantem, et animadvertentem, et omnia ad se pertinere putantem, curiosum et plenum negotii Deum?

His worshippers? And this not only for reward merely, or to avoid His displeasure, but in contemplation of His Divine perfections, wherein is contained all that is lovely and desirable, namely, the whole Creation itself; all Events and Providences; in a word, all that can perfect and consummate our natures, and make us accepted. The worship and contemplation of God will certainly be the most ravishing and delightful part of our future and everlasting blessedness.

Antoninus has said many excellent things upon this head, which may be brought for the conviction and reproof of all negligent and indifferent people. Join to him Epictetus and others, where they show the love, veneration, resignation, passive and active obedience, which such excellencies, as are in the Deity, must needs produce; and what returns of service, love, and affection in us, the worshippers of Him; striving to come as near as we can to the Exemplar, in all those virtues which any way contribute to His service; and by endeavouring to understand His will, with all devotion, sincerity, and exactness, because of His all-seeing nature, and indefectible justice, to punish and reward.

The Gentile World, who but groped after this, thought it so reasonable, that they esteemed nothing precious enough, no pains, no charge, nothing busy enough (though even to success and superstition) to demonstrate their devotion, and the sense of this duty. For this end did they offer so many expensive and bloody victims, gums, and incense; and some even themselves, and dearest relations; not only to propitiate

for them, but to testify their gratitude: as we may read of Jephtha, or Iphigenia of the heathen, the King of Moab, the rites of Saturn, and innumerable other instances. To these oblations they added prayers and Eucahristical hymns, and what other expressions of thankful hearts they could devise. Nor owe we less to that Being, in whom we live and move. God being the God of All, all are obliged to serve and adore Him. We owe ourselves to Him, who lends us ourselves to ourselves, and those faculties which He requires the service of, namely, our reason, nay, our very lives.

These are not institutions and arts of policy, but Nature's dictates, and therefore delivered and confirmed by the impressions of reverence, which all men feel and perceive within them, and with satisfaction, when they perform their duties; uneasinesses, and secret regret, when they neglect them. In short, all the world is so convinced, in this universal practice, that God is to be the object of our worship; that, as we have shown, it has been always proner to excess and superstition, idolatry and unlawful worship, than to atheism, or neglect of it. And if any there be who seem to worship none, they are no more to be reckoned among the number of human creatures, but of ill-shapen monsters, and lumps of deformity, who neither know how to reason, or reflect on what they should, and draw consequences like men of reason; or, lastly, make no use of their reason, which is worse.

Epictetus, whom we named, is so convinced of this, that he prescribes set offices, as it were; and tells us

that prayers and praises, psalms and hymns, become all our actions. For such we find especially among the poets, though to their false deities, whose favour and assistance they invoked at the entrance of most of their works and undertakings. Jamblicus calls the oblations of a sincere and pure mind the most acceptable worship; and so does Hierocles.[1] And though all this was, we acknowledge, directed to false gods, yet it denotes the reasonableness of it, and how universal and natural. And hence we read, or hear, of no people or nation, even to the last and utmost discoveries of the habitable world, but what pay some regard and worship to a superior being, whom they either love and invoke for good things, or deprecate for evil. God Almighty seeming rather to connive at their superstition than suffer them to neglect a duty so reasonable and so natural. They worshipped, though they knew not what; nor do we find them so much reproved for the duty as for their ignorance and blindness in not directing it to the right object, and in a right manner. Wherefore, "if God," says Plato, "be to be worshipped and served, let us make our addresses to God, and inquire how He will be served." How much more, then, are Christians obliged to this duty, and to that of gratitude, whom God has prevented with the knowledge and understanding of His will in this particular!

[1] See Proclus's excellent Treatise, the devout ejaculations of Simplicius, the behaviour of dying Socrates, recommending his expiring soul, with other virtuous and illustrious heathen.

Here, then, we conclude this chapter; the consequences of the titles being so perspicuous, that, if there be such a God and Sovereign Being as we have described, who has created, sustained, and provides for all; and that, in order to a future, more happy or unhappy state, He is to be revered by all, with all humble, religious, and sincere worship. And what that is will be our next inquiry.

CHAPTER V.

SECTION I. RELIGION.
SECTION II. RELIGIOUS WORSHIP.
SECTION III. NATURAL RELIGION.
SECTION IV. CONSCIENCE.
SECTION V. THEISTS.
SECTION VI. ATHEISTS.

SECTION I. RELIGION.

Religion, as being the highest reason, is that alone which makes mankind to differ from brute animals; because it renders him like his great Creator, rectifying the depravity of his nature, which, if uncultivated by religion, becomes fierce and sensual. But religion and the sense of a deity, or some transcendently excellent being, purifies the soul, and refines our nature by virtue of its precepts; there being no creature besides that can actually and intentionally address its powers and faculties to God. Wherefore, to be religious is more truly the formal distinction between men and beasts, than all that the philosophers have furnished to its definition;[1] and, therefore, more adequate to his character than either polity, society, risibility, without

[1] Animal Religionis capax.

which he were no reasonable creature, but a mere brute, the very worst of the kind. There is, indeed, among brute animals, some imperfect traces of all the perfections and qualities of man, excepting that of religion. But, with all this, they apprehend neither God, angel, or intelligence. And, therefore, Gesner, I remember, concludes that pigmies (those diminutive people, or sort of apes or satyrs, so much resembling the little men storied under that name), are, therefore, not of human race, because they have no religion.

It is true that all entities and beings whatsoever love that which is good, and does them good. And, as David says, *there is none good but God;* and, therefore, those who love good do, consequently, love God, metaphysically speaking; and the love of God being the sum of all religion, all who love that which is good are religious. But, if this love of good flows not from an intellectual principle, it is not properly religion, which is among all nations and people competent only to mankind;[1] that is, such an impression as enables him to offer the Deity a rational and spiritual worship.

"We know," says that excellent person,[2] "much of the courage and boldness of lions, horses, and other animals; but we hear nothing of their justice, equity, and beneficence, and the rest of the moral virtues. And why? They are void of reason;" and, therefore, pretend not to that sublime and radiant beam of an intel-

[1] Ex tot generibus nullum esse animal præter hominem, quod habeat notitiam aliquam Dei.—Cic. de Leg. i.

[2] Cicero de Offic., lib. i.

lectual agent to qualify them for contemplation and notions abstracted from matter, and to reflect and proceed analytically from effects to causes, and, therefore, are incapable of science (the product of ratiocination), and of the consequences resulting from the premises by inference of the conclusion, induction from universals to particulars, genus, species, and other dialectical notions and methods.

The prayers and ejaculations which parrots have been taught to utter, nay, to recite whole psalms, creeds, and litanies (as did that of Cardinal Ascanio,[1] and others were used to do) is all but impertinent prate, without relation to time or place; and what they say, fantastical and wholly inconsistent, such as they learn by rote, by drops and little fragments,[2] working on their airy fancies; nor springs it from any perennial fountain of their own, and, therefore, stops and soon becomes dry. The like may be affirmed of those other creatures, who have been made to curse and bless (as they term it) themselves; to kneel, and use other reverent gesticulations (of which, above all other, popish legends abound). They are not to be reckoned for acts of religion, but the effects of pure art, and of their masters and instructors. They do not proceed from any interior principle, as they do in man. But I needed not, perhaps, so long to have insisted on this.

[1] Rhodog., l. 3, c. 32.

[2] Neque quid dicunt scientes, neque ea quæ dicunt, temporibus locisve accommodatè dicentes; sed linguam duntaxat ad præstitutum numerum agitantes.—Apollon., l. i.

Wherefore, we return to show what religion is: namely, the most immediate tie between God and His creature, obliging to a certain law and rule, for the government of his life and actions. Wherefore, Plutarch calls it the very *cement* of society, the foundation of all legislation; and that a city had better be without houses, inhabitants, and walls, as without religion; it being generally observed, that those countries and commonwealths have been most flourishing and happy which have been the most religious; as was the Roman empire whilst religiously observing their simple rites of piety, the duties of justice, fidelity, and other moral virtues;[1] whereas, the ruin and decadence of kingdoms and dominions followed, as they degenerated by atheism, profaneness, sensuality, injustice, and other vices. The same is remarkable of particular persons and families. "Take away religion," says Tully, "and truth, fidelity, justice, and all commerce between man and mankind will come to nothing." And, therefore, religion and the service of God is the main and important business of our life. For so the wise king, after he had made experiments and considered all things, concludes that this is the whole duty of man.[2] Religion is the intercourse between heaven and earth, God and man, by which he is pleased to manifest Himself more especially to us, both for His glory and our good; as we find by the

[1] Under the heathen emperors, for instance, Hadrian, Severus, Antoninus, M. Aurelius; under the Christian, Constantine, Theodosius, &c.

[2] Eccles., xii., 13.

gracious effects of His continual bounty. The principal end in rational beings consisting in communion with, and conformity to, the Sovereign Good, which is God; and *that* communion no otherwise obtained and preserved but by religion only, should, above all things, be our chiefest aim. In a word, religion consists in our piety to God, sobriety to ourselves, justice and righteousness to our neighbour; or, as St. James, more excellently, "Pure religion and undefiled is to visit the fatherless and widow;" that is, by acts of charity and mercy, to keep ourselves unspotted from the world.

Thus, religion qualifies the Christian, and enlarges the understanding, enabling us to discern beyond the narrow confines and scantling of brutish sense and stupid ignorance; to behold and contemplate things invisible and supernatural. And this creates an habitual reverence to some Superior Being, more excellent than ourselves, and incites us to such devotion and services as we apprehend to be most agreeable to His nature. And this, since it cannot be performed without some rites and solemnities, lies in a system of all those mysteries, which concern the knowledge and service of the Deity to be worshipped, and in that manner and way alone He prescribes. And that, being under the necessity of a future state, and sensible of the present needs, we may thereby conciliate the Divine favour, for the continuance of His protection and prosperity.

Maximus Tyrius makes this difference betwixt religion and superstition, that the religious person has access to God without servile fear, opposed to filial

reverence, which is mingled with love; and calls the pious man, *the Friend of God*, and the superstitious, a mere flatterer of Him. And indeed those pagans worshipped their deities in horror and cruel dread; and, therefore, sought all possible ways to pacify them, by flattering, and pompous shows, processions, and carrying about their images, washings, purifications, corporal severities, whippings, burnings, and cuttings of their flesh; prostituting their wives and daughters, and cruelly sacrificing their children oftentimes, with a thousand prodigious impieties and troublesome methods. This was not religion in the true notion, but superstition; or, if you will, false religion, as hereafter we shall come to show. Religion amongst the wiser heathen was far from this. It was to do nothing unbecoming a reasonable nature, or molest the civil powers; and to restrain all exorbitant passions and appetites; though, indeed, it did not give those checks to the mind, and form in the best of them those noble qualities and perfections, which the true religion only teaches, and enables her votaries to do.

SECTION II. RELIGIOUS WORSHIP.

What it is, we have partly shown in the former section, namely, the worship and adoration of the Deity, operating practically and sincerely; that we believe and rely on what we worship as our sovereign good, from whom we expect both present and future happiness; or, as others, it is an awful regard of God, as a

punisher of vice, and rewarder of virtue; whose perfections produce the love and imitation of His worshipper.

Wherefore all religion and its worship consists in these two things:

1. *Credenda.*
2. *Facienda.*[1]

The first respects the true knowledge of God: the second, how He is to be worshipped and served. The one has regard to the law, the other to the gospel, as faith, prayer, good works. Then, as to *credenda* of the *being* of God, &c., we have at large made out: the *facienda* will follow in its due place.[2]

Now, though none, save man, do worship God after an intellectual manner, yet do all creatures, yea, even the most insensible and inanimate, speak the praises of the Deity, in their operations, virtue, power, and several courses. And, therefore, holy David calls upon them all to magnify Him for ever. But, to speak more particularly, religious worship is the duty and service which the creature, particularly man, pays to the Superior Power, be it by prayer, confession, praises, thanksgiving, sacrifices, kneeling, prostrations, humiliations, for the obtaining or preserving some good thing, or deprecating evil. And the rites and ceremonies of these are so many and various, that what should be natural, solemn, and rational, is, through the corruption

[1] "Matters of Belief." "Matters of Practice."

[2] Chapters vii., viii., x., xii.

of our nature, and the cunning of Satan, and his lying spirits, turned in most places to superstition. Not that all ceremonious worship is evil, when the heart accompanies the action, seeing some rites and outward usages are highly necessary for the exciting and stirring up our inward devotions. But where they make the outward ceremonies of worship the main of the religious service, as seeking to conciliate the Deity, and expiate sins by virtue of the work done. It were endless to enumerate the several manners of the worship which the blinded world paid to their gods, idols, and heroes; their sacrifices, libations, aspersions, festivities; and after what impious and ridiculous sort they performed abundance of their religious services, as they occur to us in Diodorus, the Sicilian, and other profane histories. And indeed it would be hard to find any sort of people who pretended any religion, but took care of some external solemnities, and the decent circumstance of its worship; and therefore we find so many temples, oratories, altars, and groves,—so many statues and shrines, set up in the world, — so many dedicated persons of both sexes, priests, priestesses, vestal nuns, flamens, augurs, and the like, to manage their devotions.

SECTION III. NATURAL RELIGION, OR THEOLOGY.

Now, since the soul of man is sensible how she governs and informs the body, she cannot but resolve, that some Spirit or Being it is which rules the universe, and, consequently, the Soul herself: and, therefore,

that Being ought to be regarded, worshipped, and obeyed. And this, certainly, from a natural and indelible, as well as rational, principle, partly written in our hearts, together with those necessary dictates, without which there can be no religion, or rule of living in the world; such as the equity of doing to others what we would have done to ourselves, reverence to our parents and elders, affection to our children, gratitude to benefactors, and the like. To these add the accusations of conscience upon the committing of some unnatural crime, or injustice, &c., whereby those natural duties are violated. Not to insist at present on the Divine laws, Mosaical or Christian, but on those which are moral and immutable; namely, such duties and actions as proceed from a rational creature, voluntarily and freely teaching us to adore our Maker and Benefactor.

It is this moral or natural religion which the very heathen thought worthy of them, as men, to be paid to the Divinity: and that the offenders against it should be punished with the severest evils. Murder, adulteries, perjury, and the like crimes were amongst them all detested; and, consequently, humanity, chastity, temperance, sincerity, and other virtues, were to be cherished and rewarded. Piety to the gods, and sacrifice, were of the same estimation. In a word, the entire Decalogue seems to be the law and religion of Nature herself, not one commandment of either table excepted. Nor this without the wonderful and special Providence of the Great God; since, without some

inward and natural law of right and wrong, good and evil, the state even of Nature itself (as it concerns mankind) had long since lapsed, and sunk into confusion. Had there been no justice to punish, and reward,—no inward coercion of the magistrate to restrain exorbitances, how could any government have subsisted? Wherefore, mankind was always under a law; even before God made any extraordinary promulgation of a law, man was a law to himself. His duty was written on his mind, that God might judge the world in righteousness, since where there is no law there is no transgression.[1] The main duties of piety towards God, and justice towards man, &c., being duties inscribed on the tables of our very hearts. And we feel a secret obligation to them within ourselves, approving or condemning what we do. And this is what I call Natural Religion, or the Light of Nature. Not that it is not as much the law and ordinance of God, as what He has revealed; nor does Divine Revelation at all extinguish the light of Nature, which is Reason: but approves and gives sanction to it.

Now, the nature of man consists in four degrees of perfection:

1. Of being.
2. Of living.
3. Of animality.
4. Of rationality.

Of all which, the last alone concerns the supreme and sovereign good of man. For, supposing him put

[1] Rom., iv., 15.

into the world to exist, and only *be* in it, what needed he any other life than that of a stone or tree? If only to live, what necessity of understanding? And if to exercise its animal functions, what need of reason?

To what, then, can the nature of man be ordained (all other beings in the world attaining their perfections and utmost end), than to exercise his reason upon such objects as are proper to it? And, seeing it does not consist in vain and speculative studies, gratifying the sensual part and brutish passions, it must be in studying to know himself, and to acknowledge, that He who made him, and endowed him with such advantages above the other creatures, and on whom all things depend, is worthy of his service and obedience, by living soberly, justly, and charitably, and by imitating those perfections which bring him to the nearest similitude of his Maker. Religion, therefore, is the ultimate and most natural scope, to which mankind is ordained by God. And that this is implanted in him by Nature, the consequences evince; since it is so natural to love and acknowledge those who love and do us good. And if so in man to man, much more from man to God, our bountiful Patron and Benefactor.

Man is made for society, that in society he may serve and worship God; and then, if interest unite, the benefits all perpetually receive from Heaven should unite and tie us faster to Him. If fear (according to the Hobbian doctrine) should be the only object of our service, whom should we serve but God, since He is only to be feared? Man is not considered as a mere

engine of polity, as that bold assertor would pretend, discarding all religion, natural justice, and charity, and giving the Supreme Deity no other dominion over, or title to, his creature, but power and tyranny! The love and service we call religion is what proceeds from an ingenuous and free agent, governed by the highest reason.

Some have believed the law of Nature so strong and efficacious, as to oblige us, though there were no such being as God. But we have abundantly proved there is a God, Author of Nature, and of all things else, though there were at all no law of Nature. Hobbs, indeed (as we said) puts all mankind into a state of hostility, and affirms that there is nothing naturally just or unjust at all; which utterly vacates and abolishes all Deity at once; and then is all law but the constitution of man, nature having nothing to do in the legislation. But mutual peace, kindness, love, and gratitude, being certainly the intention of the lawgiver, for the preservation of community, sufficiently overthrow the bold pseudo-philosopher's new suggestion, and necessarily infer a virtuous and religious life, separate from his state of war and rapine. If we allow a law of nature, we must acknowledge Him that made that law.

Suppose a poor deserted infant, born and abandoned in some desert place, nourished (as they feign of Romulus and Cyrus) by some savage beast, this child, grown a man, would have some religion, some fear or apprehension of another Being. For, first, as a man, he would love society, and join to others like him, though

he never saw man before, as naturally disposed to love his like. Naturally also he would love his own child, if he had one; would be pleased with a good and friendly turn; and, though all these good dispositions were obscured for a while, for want of objects to exercise them on, yet would they manifest and exert themselves, so soon as he came into company. The same we may affirm of natural religion. Such a person would, perhaps, have little conscience of remorse, because he never had occasion of hurting any body, or opportunity of doing good. The maxims of justice, and other virtues, would not appear, for the same defect of occasion. Nay, perhaps, he would be so stupid as to reflect on nothing, yet it is certain he would have some religion, as soon as his common sense began to revive, and to be cultivated; for he would then naturally reason that the objects and things he daily saw did not make themselves, and that what did not so was some great power and virtue. Thus Nature herself teaches us there is a God: and we invoke His help in distress and adversities. Men, naturally, (savage as some nations are) lift their hands and eyes to Heaven, to implore relief from thence. Nor does diversity of religions destroy all this uniform and general principle, which disposes to religion. And even superstition itself supposes a natural reverence to some God, else it could not subsist; for superstition is no other than natural religion applied to a false and erroneous object.

The confession of a God is natural to man, not as he is a living creature, but a rational creature. And it is

not from blind matter, but evidence of reason, and the dictates of conscience, which tells us, however we may attempt to suppress it, that certain actions are in themselves essentially evil, and that evil deserves punishment, and that the inflicting of punishment appertains to God only, because He best knows the degrees and obliquity of our faults. And hence results fear of being reproved for them. Of this nature are disobedience to parents, treachery to friends, blasphemy, ingratitude, and other crimes worthy chastisement: and this nature, not education, as some fondly imagine, teaches. Education may indeed direct our natural inclinations, and passions, even to unnatural objects; but can no more make them new, than it can make a new soul. We may possibly excite some seemingly new inclination or passion, which, for lying still and dormant before, appears to be new, because, till now, perhaps we had no sense of it. But to put wholly any such new passion in us were to create new powers and faculties in our souls, which is not to be done.

Now there is none so strong and invincible as man's inclination to religion, and the worshipping something as God. Natural inclinations operate necessarily, and it is to that we owe the universal consent of owning some Deity. But, in a state of nature, mankind was to receive its directions concerning the true object and nature of their religious worship from natural reason; which, if they made good use of, would certainly direct to the worship of one God.

Again, though we have all this reason and evidence

to prove religious duties to be natural, we have yet divers passions in us repugnant to our reason. But he who shall affirm we have no natural obligation to obey the guidance of our reason, being reasonable creatures, were to argue like a fool. Now, since the righteous God cannot be author of those evil passions and inclinations in us, as being contrary to His holy nature, many crimes committed here, and good things done, whilst neither of them be punished or rewarded here, natural reason tells us that there is a judgment to come hereafter, which will reward every one according to his merits.

That there are crimes against the light of Nature (whatever some pretend upon the score of education, and political laws, to keep men in subjection) such as sacrilege, adultery, parricide, blasphemy, preposterous lusts, and the like enormous villanies, we find all men and nations universally agree, as in principles of nature, and not of custom and education. For man being born for society and mutual help, such crimes would certainly destroy it; and being obliged to follow reason, that reason forbids such wickednesses as are destructive to it, and, consequently, to man's nature. There is therefore a prime and fundamental law enjoining every man, namely, Reason, which naturally distinguishes betwixt good and evil, as the basis of all government, and discipline whatsoever. These are eternal principles natural and true, and never alter, nor ever was there a time when they were not so. Justice, temperance, natural affection, sincerity, gratitude, and the like, need

not the help of education to recommend them to all mankind. Nor need we be taught that we should suffer a small and trifling loss, for the obtaining a greater benefit. Self-preservation, and the love of ourselves, prompt us to these with no other mistress than Nature. The same teaches that drunkenness and intemperance is a shameful vice, that ingratitude is base, that we ought to revere our parents, love our wives and children, reward the labourer and those who do us courtesies—in a word, do as we would be done by. And when we do the contrary, something there is within, which flies in our faces, and we fear the Divine *Nemesis*, or *Revenge*, which proves a natural atrocity in such like actions, and does not proceed from those customary prejudices, from which some pretend they spring.

The universal custom of sacrificing throughout the world, in all times and generations, was an actual confession that sin deserved death, and that the Divine justice required punishment or satisfaction. Nor is it to be shown that it ever proceeded from any Divine revelation or command, but from a very principle of Nature, as it were; though indeed the rites and ceremonies about it were prescribed afterwards to the Jews. And something there is in it of extraordinary, that the very heathen should think that the offended gods should be pleased or appeased by the death of an innocent creature's blood, and doubtless the reason of *Holocausts*, and other sacrifices by fire, did signify that no expiation could be without combustion of the whole or part;

since one man, offending another, was commonly the object of revenge, even amongst men.

Naturally, they worshipped such beings and things, as either they received most good and benefit from, or were most in fear of. And hence sprung their worship and adoration of the Sun, Moon, Heavenly Orbs and Constellations; Jupiter for Rain, Ceres for Corn, Bacchus for Wine, Esculapius for health, and the rest. The Egyptian and Grecian theology was a kind of astrological magic, founded on the hypothesis of their demons, and the heavens, which they thought they governed. Not that they believed the slum wrought any such stupendous effects, or impregnated their talismans, by their proper virtue; but as they were intelligences themselves, or divinely influenced, and directed by the spirits residing in them, and ruling part of the inferior world. They fancied the sun a kind of archangel, and some called it the organ or instrument of God, the Divine harp, whose harmony set in motion the rest of the celestial bodies.

Nor naturally did they worship their idols, at first, as true gods, but as symbols only, and representations of such as they loved, and esteemed themselves obliged to. For it was not possible he who carved a piece of stupid wood, or the like inactive material, into the figure of a man, should believe that could help him in time of adversity, which, being set in a niche or hole, could not preserve itself from rotting, being burned, or stolen away. But it was process of time, and false principles, which (as we have showed) depraved and corrupted the

after age. From venerating the pictures and images of their fathers and benefactors, they fell to deifying of them, and then was there no end of their superstition. But this was the corruption of natural religion, which induced men to worship the great Creator, from the contemplation of the fabric of the aspectable world, the regular course of the heavenly bodies, and the goodly economy of the universe. And certainly this was of all other the most rational and natural, and, being accompanied with a sincere and moral life, did come the nearest to the true motive of worship.

But how far one may go in religion, by natural light only, is by no means to be relied on, though the wise and virtuous Pagans were charitably thought of by some even of the Christian Fathers (before their hot disputes against the Pelagians) and the modern Jews. Doubtless, so far, as to rise in judgment against those, who have had the full meridian light to guide them, and have obstinately shut their eyes, because they loved darkness more than light. Wherefore we leave them to their own master. How God may deal with these delirious Heathen, we are not to judge, only this is certain, that none are saved but through the merits of Jesus.[1]

From all that has been said, it is evident that religion is so necessary, and so natural to the well-being of the world, and so rational, that even a false religion, conscientiously practised, were better than none; and that such as have been the most pious and religious

[1] See a Treatise on Pagan Philosophy, by Francis de la Mothe.

have been blessed with many temporal things, and the contemners of even the false gods, and holy things dedicated to them, never prospered, as may appear by innumerable instances of sacrilege and profaneness, perjury, &c., which have been signally punished.

Besides that, religion, above all, conduces to the enlarging and regulating our faculties, and rendering us invariably happy and tranquil. And that it really gives a man a kind of participation of the Divine Nature, exalting the understanding, regulating the will, cohibiting and restraining the passions, governing our appetites, and producing a self-satisfaction unspeakable, makes us easy to ourselves and others, fills the soul with joy at its present condition, and contemplation of the future, gives him a steady assurance, and serenity of mind, whatsoever happens of change or vicissitude in this world. In a word, religion is all kind of felicity. It renders a man debonair, gentle, patient, charitable, and easily reconcileable—top-full of inward joy and complacency. So true is that of the philosopher. True joy consists not in raillery and loud laughter, but in a placid and sober cheerfulness.[1]

SECTION IV. CONSCIENCE.

Conscience, as a part of natural religion, is God's supreme tribunal, erected in every man's breast, and is that little *consistory of the Soul*, as Philo calls it; and, as Antoninus,[2] the voice of God, the domestic deity; where He

[1] On this, see the most excellent and pious Dr. Barrow.

[2] Ἔνοικος Θεὸς.—Anton., lib. iii.

keeps a perpetual sessions—where, as God's Vicegerent in the minor world, he accuses, judges, executes, to punish, reward, and crown, according to our deserts.

It is His spy and intelligencer—monitor and recorder, and a thousand witnesses, from whom none can abscond himself, none can fly. She is the very image by which man represented his Maker in innocence; and so absolutely necessary for the conduct of our lives, and maintaining the dignity of our nature, that without her we should degenerate below that of brutes—be more savage and indomitable. In a word, conscience is the supreme reason—the highest act of the practical intellect, and may be said as much to constitute the definition of man, as any thing which distinguishes him from the beasts that perish. Not that it implies any distinct faculty in the soul, by which we comprehend those natural notions concerning good and evil, by a compound act of reason; but that which seems to be a certain innate habit, or active principle, radicated in the very being and constitution of things themselves, without any dependence on custom, positive laws, and sanctions; namely, a law written on our hearts, to which not only all our actions but all our thoughts are accountable.[1] She is an intellectual memory of what our reason dictates; and does accordingly elect, examine, accuse, convict, excuse, absolve, or determine absolutely, and without partiality. She is still the same in solitude or in company, at home and abroad, by night and by day; she goes abroad with us, returns home with

[1] Rom., ii., 15.

us. She thrusts herself into all societies, all business; is privy to our most secret recesses and designs, pries into our closets. There is no charm, no bribe, no chain able to bind her; no sense of the body so nicely tender. She is the very eye of the rational soul; the least mote or dust grieves and offends her; nor is she ever at peace till it be cast out. And to this most absolute despot on earth was all mankind obliged, even before there was made any external revelation, or promulgation of other law. Nor to any creature was it else prescribed, because man only was endowed with reason and self-reflection.

The characters inscribed in conscience are indelible; no tyrant could ever silence her. She is the boldest thing in nature; clamorous to eternity, till she be heard and satisfied: nor lies there any just appeal from her tribunal. And though she may sometimes possibly err, and be misguided, sometimes clouded, and, for a time, in a kind of slumber, the least noise awakes her, and then she barks afresh, and stings like a thousand scorpions. In sum, Conscience, as Tertullian,[1] truly calls her, is the most irrefragable and convincing argument that there is a just and righteous God, whom we are religiously to worship; and that, however Atheists and wicked men may hector it for the time, and seem to bear it out, the wound remains. "Manet alta mente repôstum."[2]

God Almighty never bestowed a more divine and ex-

[1] De Animâ.

[2] "Deep graven in her heart the wound remains."
Dryden's *Virgil.*

cellent gift on mortal man:[1] not only in the sense of Christian men, but by the suffrages of the wisest Heathen, as, besides others,[2] Cicero, above all the rest, has shown in that incomparable piece, his *Offices*, which I hold to be one of the best books of *Cases of Conscience* that was ever published, after the sacred Scriptures. Would that our young gentlemen *did* study well that book! (to say nothing of Seneca, Antoninus, Epictetus, Plutarch, &c.) it might show them there was such a thing as religion and natural conscience, directing men to the virtues of piety and justice, before there was any revelation, as is made manifest to us by a singular and peculiar grace. For St. Paul has intimated as much as this to the proselyte Romans—"Because" (speaking of the Pagan world) "that which may be known of God is manifested in them, for God has showed it to them: namely, things invisible by things visible, the creation of the world manifesting His power and Deity, so that they are without excuse.[3] For when the Gentiles, which have not the positive law," (as the Jews had, by extraordinary revelation) "do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law, or religion to themselves, which show the work of the law written in their hearts; their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another."[4]

[1] Nihil homini dedit Deus ipse divinius. Lact. De Ver. Cult., l. ii., c. 24.

[2] Euripides, Seneca, Plutarch. Cic. Offic., l. 3; Juv. Sat. 13.

[3] Rom., i., 19, 20. [4] Rom., ii., 14-16.

To conclude: the law of Nature is as much the law of God as what is revealed; seeing it teaches us those virtues and religious precepts, without which no religion will bring us to happiness; inasmuch (as we showed) even some of the more charitable Fathers and devout men, as Justin Martyr, Clemens Alexandrinus, St. Chrysostom, and others, had favourable thoughts of the salvation even of some virtuous Pagans, living according to the light of nature. Let us leave them to the infinite mercies of God, whose ways are in the dark abyss, and who will have mercy, on whom He will have mercy; though upon none without the influence and merit of a Saviour; nor to us is there any other name given under Heaven by which we may be saved, as we shall come to show in due place. Waving, then, all revelation for the present, let us hear the Theist.

SECTION V. THEISTS.

Many, to whom all religions are alike, are forced, from the invincible power of natural reason, to confess that there is a God, and that he is to be worshipped with rational adoration. Something, of necessity, must be *first* and *eternal;* otherwise, never could any thing have been which is. And He who made all could have no matter which He did not make: for, if any thing was made, which He did not make, then He did not make all. But something did make all: nor can any thing make itself, for then it must be before itself, which were absurd. If there had ever been nothing, or no cause, nothing could ever have been: something, there-

fore, must be, that never was made—some *αὐτόφυες* self-originated, and eternal; and, therefore, whatever difficulties there may be in the notion of an Eternal Being, something eternal must be acknowledged. And much more obvious and rational is the notion of a First Cause, than to constitute either matter, or the universe itself, eternal.

To say that Nature made all things, is to say that God did make all. Nature is, otherwise, a thing that does not know, but acts by the direction and appointment of something which does; and, therefore, our Hobbists and new philosophers are pleased, or rather forced, to allow God an understanding, perceptive existence, though, withal, that He does all things arbitrarily, without any rule or nature of goodness, justice, and the like. Indeed, God does not all things immediately in the productions which we daily behold, but He governs the motion of matter, and what we call Nature, to the form designed. And though that Nature do no more comprehend the reason of what it does, nor the end wherefore, yet she acts regularly to that end, guided, as she is, by a mental causality.

The Cartesians tell us that there is no such thing as substantial life any where; and that even human volition is mechanically produced from certain *effluvia* and exuvious membranes, as it were. They will not endure any scale or degree of entities, lest they should find a link or chain which should bring them to a First Being.

In the mean time, to imagine that a gross body—tossed and jumbled up and down, and beaten to an in-

visible dust, should be pounded and sifted into rationality, wisdom, a vastly understanding soul, and invent such arts and sciences, performing such admirable effects —were to debase mankind to the utmost degree of credulous folly. That chance, which never yet composed any thing, should make the most admirable of all the works of God! Socrates, Plato, Cicero, and the rest, believed that God created the world, though holding matter to be eternal; supposing three things in God, matter, idea, and the divine conception. But matter, doubtless, as well as what was educed out of it, was made by God; and He who created spirits and substances immaterial (for out of what pre-existent matter could He make them?) could certainly create matter out of nothing—nothing, at least, which we see or can conceive, nor out of any thing which He did not make; as our blessed Saviour effected miracles by a word only, without any dependence on matter. Nothing is made of nothing, therefore, as to our sensible comprehensions; which yet may be understood by abstracted notions of reason, seeing we are ignorant of infinite possible powers and possibilites. We daily see and contemplate works of His power, not how He operates, *Opera ipsius videntur oculis; quomodò illa fecerit ne mente quidem videntur*, as Lactantius elegantly.

Matter, therefore, doubtless, as well as the things made out of matter, was created by God, who, in making matter, made all things: seeing the things made are only through the modification of matter, but not by fortuitous and epicurean chance. This established, safely

might the first philosophers affirm nothing ready made but matter.[1] Wherefore, says St. Basil, God was not only the inventor of the scheme and figure, but Maker of Nature herself.[2]

Again, what the artificer is to the work of art, the same is the Creator of all things to the universal works of nature; though, by the same means, which are the testimonies of the creature, we are led to that independent Being which made and maintains them. This is a prime notion of a God; not from the ratiocination of a few illuminated ones, but the sense and argument of those who subdued all the then discovered world, namely, the Romans, who are reported to have found no atheists among all their conquered nations. So that, if any of them there were who professed no religion, it does not follow they own no god; though perhaps they denied His providence, as did the Epicureans. And, if any others there be, they are so very few and inconsiderable, as cannot amount to the least prejudice of the truth. And whether at some time or other they apprehend nothing, is very doubtful, or rather, there is no doubt at all but they do, the principle of a deity being so universally obvious.

To approach still nearer the light, whether of nature or obscure revelation, we find the most cautious of the heathen philosophers, Hermes himself, naming one God, Father, Principle, Creator of all things, ascribing eternity to Him, and divers other Divine attributes; for

[1] Arist. Phys., i., 8; Metaph., l.

[2] S. Basil. Hexam, l. ii., c. 1.

which he acknowledges all worship due to Him. To the same effect, also, Zoroaster, out of whom some would produce no obscure glimmerings of an early notion, among the heathen, of a Trinity. And such expressions are so clear and frequent in Trismegistus, that one would be astonished at the spirit and majesty of his writings, especially when he treats of the nature and works of God.[1] And the sect of the Pythagorean Gymnosophists, as the Brahmins of this day, retain abundance of this. Likely it is, I confess, that Pythagoras might learn something from the Jews, among whom he so long conversed; but certainly he could not have that of three Deities, which was the religion of his particular sect. And yet, such a notion it seems they had, though in another place he owns but one, whom he styles All in All, *Origo*, *Mens*, *Vita*, &c.[2]

Nor is it only among these we have a *Deity* plainly acknowledged, but His Divine attributes also. He is called Father of the world, the only Essential Being, with other scriptural expressions. The like we meet with in Jamblicus, speaking of the unity and power, whence he derives an argument for the silent and spiritual adoration due to God; as both Proclus, Simplicius, and even Porphyry himself acknowledge; especially

[1] It is true that this work is suspected to be of a much later date; but, for my part, I never could find the man who challenged it from him, and it is questionless so ancient, as we hardly guess when it was written.

[2] To this accord Parmenidas, Empedocles, Xenophon, Hierocles, Thales, Anaxagoras, Timæus, and many others.

Plotinus, and generally those of the Academy. Whenever, says Plato, I mention but one God only, take what I say for good earnest.[1] This, it seems, was the test in those days. And it is observable how he advises his disciples to search after the Μονάδα, which Pythagoras calls the *prime*. And, indeed, they did not familiarly name more, whatever, out of depraved custom and popular use, they now and then spake with the vulgar. Yet, as Tertullian affirms, even in their ordinary discourse and communication, they seldom named above one God, always looking up to heaven.

But it were a superfluous undertaking, in an age so well acquainted with their writings, to recite all that might be collected out of these Deists, especially the Platonists, of whom was the great Socrates, reported to have suffered martyrdom for his opinion of the unity of God. But indeed it was not only his, but the confession of all the rest; all of them agreeing in ascribing power, beneficence, purity, omniscience, eternity, and the rest of the divine and incommunicable attributes to Him.[2] Wherefore Maximus Tyrius exhorts men not to set their affections here below, but to contemplate God, and penetrate, even beyond this aspectable world, to the invisible nature. In a word, it is impossible to show that God cannot exist, and therefore plain madness to believe he does not. And, therefore, when a thing is

[1] See his Epistle to Dionysius.

[2] Cic. de Divin., l. i.; Seneca Ep., 41, 44, 76; Anton., l. 2; see S. Aug. de Cic. Dei, lib. xi., c. 22.

not by institution, law, or custom, but universal suffrage, it must certainly be true, and consequently a God.[1]

SECTION VI. ATHEISTS.[2]

Atheists are properly those who derive all from senseless matter. These are called our new philosophers, men of high thought, *Esprits forts*, who yet ascend no farther than this dunghill earth; so as they will have God contribute nothing more to the fabric of the universe than his whirling about the *vortices* of matter, globose and striate particles, from whose casual motions, according to certain catholic laws of nature and matter, all things, animate and inanimate, proceed; without the conduct, forsooth, of any mind, wisdom, or providence whatsoever. But we have already overthrown these impertinences, no ways averse to the Corpuscularian opinion and mechanism of nature, as the sole contrivance of the most wise and powerful God, for His own glory, and to lead us to the contemplation of His perfections. Take the whole world together, and there is nothing (however things may appear to us singly) but what is worthy of God, and contributes to the use, beauty, and harmony of the whole, and of each particular. And if any evil there be in them, it is not from God, but ourselves. So true is that of St. Augustine, *Malæ voluntatis efficiens est nihil*, namely, evil has no cause besides itself, and has therefore no nature; so as it is the loss of good that has given it name.

[1] On this head see the foregoing chapters i. and ii.

[2] Consult the two first sermons of Dr. Tillotson, part 1.

Because they cavil that there is so much mischief among wicked men, and that all things are not calm alike; whereas it is argument of a greater providence that men are of several inclinations and tempers for the maintaining of peace and order,—that some command and others obey,—some teach and others learn,—since, but for these seeming contrarieties and subordinations, all would be competitors for the same thing, and there could be no living, no government, no polity; and the same extends to all things else in nature, for the benefit of all. Nor is there any music grateful but has its discords. Thus, the needs of some produce commerce, acquaintance, industry, and show us the use of passions and affections, namely, to exercise our virtue.

Others we find displeased at the structure and fabric of the world. Let its parts be compared together with the whole, and we shall also find nothing but harmony and beauty in it, displaying a variety, and constant in all its revolutions and seasons, which are useful and necessary, not only for us, but for all other creatures: so that what perhaps may be noxious to one is health and medicine to another. For to think so highly of ourselves, as if nothing else were to share with us, were insupportable arrogance.[1]

Indeed, when a religious person looks up to heaven, and humbly casts his eyes upon the inferior world, contemplating how many more of God's creatures were ordained to make his life and being here agreeable, he cannot but with holy David break into ecstasy,[2] and find

[1] Seneca, de Irâ.

[2] Psalm viii.

himself obliged to more grateful returns, because, in addition to all this, he is qualified with an intellectual soul, and capacities to make the best use of what he receives; and, unless he obstinately shut his eyes, must acknowledge God in all he sees. For, to require other demonstration, and to believe nothing save what they see, as it is absurd, so it is not possible any rational creature should be so stupid. To think all things demonstrable, takes away demonstration itself: nor is there any Atheist of them all but believes innumerable things which he never sees. Besides, all religion consists in objects which could not be and exist if they were visible. Thus, we see not the past, nor future, nor are our very hearts and souls to be seen, without our own destruction; yet, both exist, or else we could not live. We should therefore take estimate of the powers from the effects, and not the contrary. We wonder how the soul survives the body, when we should more admire how a spirit should unite with matter. The union of the soul and body is more stupendous than their separation. Who can comprehend the alliance of a substance extended, and that takes up place, has bounds to contain it, and only acts at present upon other subjects, with a thing that has no figure, extension, colour, fluidity, or solidity; and yet which is everywhere, whilst destitute of parts? We admire at the mention of a Creator and His providence in preserving all things, when we should rather wonder how we have lived so long in the world, for what purpose, whence we came, and what will become of us. O, the depths of the wis-

dom of God! How inscrutable are all His ways! But of this see Chapter X, where we have more at large shown the absurdity of requiring demonstration and miracles to obtain belief of things which prove themselves. Incredulity here is the most foolish and dangerous; for its consequences are affected ignorance, pride, singularity, disingenuity, obstinacy, uncharitableness, suspicion, laziness, (what shall I call it?) monstrous ill-nature, and worse, near the sin against the Holy Ghost.

There is nothing which Atheists and half philosophers (unworthy of that name) do more ridicule than the punishment and fire of hell: that, being a thing material, it should operate on immaterials; not considering that the holy scriptures make use of divers such images, as are known by every one, to represent what is otherwise inconceivable; and therefore borrows that of fire and brimstone, storm and tempest, the never-dying worm, outward darkness, &c., (such as the Egyptians felt) the valley of Hinnom, and the like, because there is nothing more tormenting and affrightful than those pains in which fire and these ingredients are used among cruel men.

And the same may be said of heaven and the abodes of the blessed—the description of the celestial city drawn by St. John;[1] which all indeed fall short, if literally taken. But that, which they represent, is infinitely greater than the highest ideas can produce to resemble them by; but yet such as best convey their

[1] Rev., xxii.

meaning to all the world; there being nothing here on earth, which can better affect us, and our imagination, to comprehend the dreadfulness of the damned receptacles, and the glories of a Heavenly Paradise. Were they any other ways described, and as they are in themselves, we should not understand them while we are in this frail and mortal state. They exceed our utmost capacities at present, but may sufficiently stir us up to avoid the one, and strive for the other. The like may be said of the solemnity of the Last Judgment, by resembling it to the circumstances of our earthly tribunals, and assizes, where criminals are tried, acquitted, or condemned. And with similar images has our blessed Lord represented several sublime and real mysteries, as of the Spouse, the Virgin, the Marriage of the Lamb, the Master and Servants, the Shepherd and his Flock, Tares and the Wheat, the Rich Man and Lazarus.

The like quarrel have they to that of the soul's immortality, though the very Heathen have been persuaded of it from the beginning.[1] Aristotle[2] confesses the soul to be ἀπαθὴς, ἀμιγὴς, ἁπλοῦς, *impassible, pure, simple,* and consequently not subject to corruption. And what means his Ἐντελέχεια, but a divine principle?

But I shall need pursue this no farther, having already done it so copiously in Chapter III. In the mean time, that which seems to have led men into these later absurdities may have been the *schools*, fancy-

[1] Seneca, Ep. 65-117; Cicero, De Amicit. Tuscul., ii.

[2] De Animâ.

ing real entities, and substantive qualities of matter, distinct from the modifications of bodies, and yet generable out of them, and conceptible into them. Whereas, though all life of a compound nature be indeed dissipable, our souls and real entities remain entire, when divested of this gross and material flesh.

Then, as to other spirits, apparitions, and miracles, which Atheists deride, though there are (it is confessed) many impostors and cheats for secular interests, yet true ones have been so attested, in all histories and ages, by matters of fact, laws, and other authentic records, that it were impudence to disbelieve them, as we shall come hereafter to show.

Finally, predictions have been asserted, also, by the gravest philosophers.[1] Why, then, should we call into question what the heathen made no doubt of, who have *a more sure word of prophecy;* for their oracles often told them lies—the Scriptures of God never. Many of them were acknowledged by the Pagans themselves, as that of Daniel, by Porphyry, and others; of which in our Eighth Chapter.

They had, also, imperfect notions of the *Fall of Man*, and of his having been once in a more happy state. A fragment of Cicero gives us no obscure hint, where he says, as if some prophet or expounder of the Divine mind had said, *Nos ob scelera suscepta in vitâ superiore*,

1 See the learned Cicero's book, *De Divinatione*, where he tells us of a discourse written by Chrysippus, and that many of them came to pass, doubtless, by God's permission.

pœnarum ineundarum causâ, natos esse.[1] The poets sing of the golden age; and Hesiod's fancy of man's misery, through the curiosity of a woman opening Pandora's box, is not to be passed over no more than Plato's, Ἀνδρόγυνος, or woman cleft out of man. The impudence of the old heroes and the gigantic rebellion has authority among the heathen. So the story of the Flood. And their general assent, that all the world shall one day perish by fire, that it also had beginning out of chaos, and that night begat the day.

They held two principles, *Deus* and *Dæmon*—one good, the other evil. And Homer feigns an invisible power, which walked about the world, inspecting the actions of men, and of God's special residence in some higher orb. In a word, these opinions were not only taken up by the vulgar and ignorant alone, but asserted by the most knowing among them, and it begat veneration in them to their deities. And they oftentimes appealed to them and to the judgment to come, as Clemens Alexandrinus abundantly proves. Nor was this ineffectual for the conduct of their lives. They abhorred incest, had solemn laws of matrimony, they took care of their parents, decently interred their dead, practised both distributive and commutative justice, and for other moral virtues exceeded many Christians.

These, and sundry more religious particulars, whether coming to the rest of the world from the Chaldæans, Phenicians, or Egyptians, by books or tradition, from

[1] "We are born to undergo punishment for crimes committed in a former life."

where the first letters and more useful arts proceeded; and from places nearer the terrestrial paradise, and derived to us from the most ancient historians, have great weight with considering men. As Aristotle well conjectures, that though the greatest truths might, in tract of time, be much corrupted, yet those which came from the earliest times carry, evidently, marks of sincerity. Their descriptions of the infernal regions, and punition of evil-doers there; the placing their virtuous heroes and benefactors among the gods, where they enjoyed light and perpetual repose, were not the fictions of poets only, since we find Socrates discoursing of his migration and departure to a mansion where the gods inhabited.

Were there no prospect beyond the present phenomena, conscience would not be so clamorous and unquiet after the committing some facinorous crime. Nor would the stoutest persons, as some we read of (and others we have known), fear the dark, like children, and the burying-places of the dead. The boldest Atheist has dreaded thunder. And if there be no God or account to be given after this frail life, why, of all others, are they, of all others, unwilling to die, though ever so miserable and ill at ease here? They object the common calamity which befalls the godly, as well as impious, many times in this life: but take not the pains to observe how infinite numbers more, who led debauched lives, and are as without God in the world, come to more fatal ends. Whilst the signal disasters of profligate men are remarkable in more frequent and

fearful judgments, they overwhelm them suddenly, and all ages have taken notice of the circumstances. Thus tyrants, oppressors, persecutors, murderers, adulterers, perjurers, sacrilegious persons, traitors, profane and atheistical men seldom escape vengeance in this life. Witness Alexander, Cæsar, Nero, Domitian, Judas, Absalom, Abimelech, and innumerable others of elder times. To whom we may add, of nearer to us—Richard the Third, Pope Alexander the Sixth, and most of those who lately acted that inhuman tragedy among us, whose carcases came, by the gibbet, to infamous ends.

And we see a secret moth consuming private families for sacrilege, oppression, rapine, injustice, bastardy, and the like. The strange detection of murders would fill volumes to recount them, and the cruel persecutors of God's people rarely came to their graves in peace, of which see that excellent plea of Lactantius, newly come to light.[1] Solomon[2] tells us a bird of the air shall discover treason. And seldom do we find notorious villanies and bloody persecutors pass unpunished even in this life. On the contrary, the rewards of virtuous and religious persons are as conspicuous, if not in worldly riches and external splendour, yet in inward comforts, contentedness, and acquiescence, cheerful and healthy lives, patience in sickness, and ravishing hopes of future joys when they come to die.

To conclude:—things future are so above our comprehension, that the wisest men are but good guessers. None but the Maker of all things, and who gave His

[1] De Mortibus persecutorum. [2] Eccles., x., 20.

creatures faculty to work, and who rules and directs their operations to their several ends, can possibly see the effects depending upon those causes. And, therefore, by what means we may be assured of a prophecy, by the same we may be of a Deity. For, unless all records of the world were forged, and all notices of history designed on purpose to put a cheat on posterity, and abuse their own children, whom all parents in all ages have cherished and wished happy, there can be no pretence to suspect the being of a God. All the works of nature are uniform, and there is a certain sphere of every creature's power and activity. If, then, any action be performed, which is not within the compass of the power of any natural agent; if anything wrought by the intervention of a body that bears no proportion to it, or have no natural aptitude so to work, it must, of necessity, be ascribed to some cause transcending all natural causes, and universally disposing them. Thus, every miracle proves its author to be God, and every act of omnipotency is a demonstration against the Atheists.

Our own consciences within us find comfort and approbation in virtuous and honest actions, and remorse for wicked and base ones. The most obdurate Atheist and pagan have (as we showed) acknowledged it. Nor is it to be obliterated by any possible means. Consider we Caligula, who, though a professed Atheist, yet hid his head under a bed at the thunder and lightning, upon consideration of his guilt; so that, what in his obstinacy and wilfulness he denied, he, by that involuntary action,

confessed. When, therefore, this truth will not be confessed, it shall be extorted at one time or other. How unhappy, then, he who denies a God to himself, and proves it to another! And what a madness not to acknowledge Him, of whom it is impossible to be ignorant! Though some ungracious children may be so wicked as not to honour their parents, we never heard of any one who denied they had them. For man being the only nature capable of religion, that is, of apprehending a Deity, and expecting future rewards and punishments, no endeavour could utterly suppress it.[1]

They deny it in the day, says Seneca, but confess it at night. God is the principle of the knowledge we have of His existence, both by His works, without in the visible world, and in the impressions He has engraved in our souls. And if any be who deny this truth, they are to be looked upon and treated rather as monsters than as men. Indeed, custom and education do, for the most part, sway men more than serious reflections on the reasonableness of believing a Deity. But that proceeds from their desire of gratifying a present, sensual, and inordinate passion. They give themselves no leisure to recollect, and make use of their reason, which would certainly lead them to be religious. It is not, therefore, any prejudice of education conducts us to the belief of a God, and that He ought to be wor-

[1] Cic. de Legibus. Ex tot generibus nullum est animal, quod non habeat notitiam aliquam Dei; ipsisque in hominibus nulla gens est, neque tam immansueta, neque tam fera, quæ non, etiamsi ignoret, qualem habere deum debeat, tamen habendum sciat.

shipped by us, but a necessary consequence of all they see in the creation. No effect of education or custom forces us to believe all the wisdom, power, goodness, and perfection of God; that He loves, provides for, and expects His creatures should love, acknowledge, and adore Him, and condemns all impiety, and such actions as are destructive to our well being; that God should be so good and merciful to impious men here, and virtue go unrewarded, if there were not a just and certain dispensation to come.

These truths, not our education, but common sense and natural reason evinces. To affirm that God approves and loves all men and actions alike, good and bad, were to make the fountain of justice and virtue wicked and imperfect; which were to render Him no God, or one at least who takes no notice of our actions. If it be objected that God, of His Omnipotent power, being absolutely free to do as He will, may voluntarily lay aside all thought and concern for us, it is answered, that God must needs know himself, and, if so, all beings that ever issued from Him; and, contemplating His own beneficence, cannot but regard those objects for whose sake His goodness and bounty is communicated. For God's perfections being infinite, nothing can be pain, or molestance to Him.

The Atheist, then, is grievously perplexed betwixt these two truths:—the *One*, that certain actions are wicked, because their own reason, conscience, universal consent, natural law, and every thing else enforce it; the *other*, that wicked actions ought not to be attri-

buted (as to their principle) to that God who condemns them, and has imprinted in our souls the same sentiments by the light of Nature and our reason.

But supposing, with some learned men, who are yet far from being Atheists, that the knowledge of a Deity be not connatural to our souls, for that the Soul has rather (say they) no in-bred knowledge at all, or of any thing from the beginning, but is a *rasa tabula*, without the least character of knowledge imprinted in her, unless we were assured of her pre-existence. For this cause, God never charges any with their ignorance of Him upon that account; so that men cannot ground their knowledge of God's existence upon self-evidence; for whosoever shall deny it, can (say some) by no means be convinced; it being irrational to tell one who is in doubt of it that he must believe it because it is evident, when he knows that he only doubts because it is not evident to him, at least. But, though this were so, yet that God is, will be apparent to us so soon as reason exerts herself by its connexion to other truths; as the dependency of inferior beings leads us, whether we will or no, to the Superior Independent Being, or nature of infinite perfection, potential and causative of all other beings.[1]

To conclude, then: it is a most dangerous thing to be an Atheist; or, if men be not such, to live like

[1] Deus est Suum Esse; sed quia nos non scimus de Deo, quid est, non est nobis per se notus; sed indiget demonstrari per ea, quæ sunt magis nota, quoad nos, et minùs nota quoad naturum, scilicet per effectus.—*Aquinas.*

Atheists. For, whatever becomes of those who are of a false religion (which we next come to treat of), he that is of none is sure to perish. If the one be upon an *uncertainty*, the other is upon an *impossibility*, of being saved. It is, therefore, better by far uncertainly to err than certainly to perish. The weakest hopes are better than utter despair. But the thing they fancy is an absolute annihilation, which is but a very melancholy meditation; and, whatever they pretend, the dread and horror of death perplexes them; but why so if there be not something after death which they fear and doubt of? The frights and torments of a guilty conscience and of revenge, even in the heathen, put this out of the question.

There may be, indeed, numbers of practical Atheists, as daily, indeed, we find too many; yet it is hard to believe it possible there should be any speculative Atheist. There are many other most convincing arguments and motives from the creation of the universe, the great and lesser world, man, and the Providence of God, in preserving and governing them, which we have abundantly produced in most of the foregoing Chapters, to evince the being of a Deity, and confound the Atheist; and, therefore, we will here shut up the present.

CHAPTER VI.

OF THE FALSE, PAGAN, AND GENTILE RELIGION.

SECTION I. RISE OF IDOLATRY.
SECTION II. IMAGE WORSHIP.
SECTION III. PAGAN PHILOSOPHY.

Primus sapientiæ gradus est falsa intelligere.
LACTANTIUS.

SECTION I. RISE OF IDOLATRY.

The false and Pagan religion sprung from the corruption of the natural, which was first itself corrupted by the Fall of Man, who only had it in perfection till he lost his innocency. So those impaired remainders of it, which some of his immediate posterity retained, were well nigh lost, and extremely adulterated, by tract of time, from the posterity of Cain. And this corruption was so universal, that the Deluge, which swept away the whole world, excepting eight persons only, did not so cleanse the race of mankind, but that, soon after the flood, Idolatry and Superstition perverted it again in the grossest manner; turning religion, and the worship of the true God, into all manner of licentiousness and superstition. Satan, the god of this

lower world, blinding their eyes, the religion they professed was such as their own imaginations had set up, worshipping and serving the creature more than the Creator, who is God blessed for ever.[1]

Now, what their religion was before that general cataclysm, which swept away things as well as men, is no where described for us by any human author of credit. Their sins and wickedness was it, which brought upon them that swift destruction we have in Genesis. Men, multiplying in the earth, were given so to luxury, that God, seeing their wickedness was great, and every imagination of the thoughts of their hearts evil continually, repented that He had made man. Nor doubt we but, amongst other their sins, idolatry had spread itself, even in those early days, through the subtlety of that old and malicious serpent, who seduced our first parents from the service of the true God; whose worship, consisting chiefly in speculation upon the works of Creation, they celebrated in sacrifices and oblations from the beginning, clothing themselves with the skins of the beasts they offered.

But the first objects of their early worship, after the flood, and perhaps too before it (I mean, of those who were of the more wicked race, and who had forgotten that of the true God), might, most likely, as the most natural, have been of the Heavenly fires, the sun, and moon, and host of Heaven (as among the Egyptians, under the names of Osiris, or Serapis and Isis), from the benefits received by their influence; those bright

[1] Gen., iv.

constellations being reputed to be nearest the seats and mansions of the gods; and therefore named Θέοι,[1] from their perpetual motions; and chose high places and mountains to sacrifice on, as nearest those constellations. They deemed the Sun a kind of archangel, and called him the organ or divine harp of the Deity, whose harmony charmed the rest of the universe into order; as that of Orpheus did the stones into the city of Thebes. And upon this conceited hypothesis was founded the astrological magic of the Persians and Egyptians, with their Demŏns and Intelligences, who governed their revolutions, and influenced their superstitious talismans.

Most probably it is that Cham, the profane son of Noah, and his descendants, having, as we said, quite lost the knowledge of the true God, and, choosing Egypt for their country, set on foot this worship, which, as Maimonides observes, was so general, that the notice of any other god was rarely known; ascribing all events to the operations of the Heavens, whom they also invoked upon all occasions, holding up their hands, and lifting up their eyes to them in distress. And this, seconded perhaps by revelations, pretended at least, as Origen thinks, might be allowed by God Himself, winking at their ignorance, before the promulgation of the law, to keep the world from yet that grosser idolatry into which it afterwards fell. But the good father is single in this fancy; though, as it was the most natural and tolerable worship, whilst men received the benefit of their light and influences,[2] they might haply address

[1] Θεός, from *θεῖν*, to run.

[2] Wisd., xiii., 2, 3.

to them as mediators; yet, when they added sacrifices, burnt incense, and performed other rites, and actions of Divine adoration also, it turned to flat idolatry, taking the creature for the Creator. For it seems they stayed not here, nor were they content with these *appearances.*

The Author of Wisdom[1] informs us at large that the devising of idols was the beginning of spiritual fornication, and the invention of them the corruption of life. Not that it should be so for ever, but as these mighty tyrants (giants as they were called) and vain-glory of men introduced them, so in time those things, which were nothing (for an idol is nothing in the world), should in time come to nothing. A Father, says that author, afflicted with untimely mourning, when he had made an image of his deceased child, soon taken away, now honoured him as a god, who was then but a dead man, and delivered to those who were under him ceremonies and sacrifices. For many of the Pagan gods were only the souls of dead men, called by the Greeks heroes, or by the Latins, *Manes;* such as Hercules, Æsculapius, &c. And thus, in process of time, an impious custom, grown strong, was observed as a law; and graven images were worshipped by the commandment of kings. For men could not know them in presence, because they dwelt far off; so thus made an express image of a king, that they might flatter the absent. Thus, the multitude, allured by the grace of the artificer's work, took him for a god. And, likely it is, that (as we noted) the Devil, by pretended appa-

[2] Wisd., xiv., 14, 27.

ritions, revelations, false miracles, and tricks, done in and about those statues, persuaded a belief of the presence of the imaginary deities which they represented. And this was the occasion to deceive the world,—men under their calamity or tyranny ascribing unto stones and stocks the Incommunicable Name. Nor was this all; for, whilst they erred in the knowledge of God, they devised other gods, slaying their very children in sacrifice, and used secret ceremonies, revellings, and abominable rites,—the worship of images, not to be named, being the beginning, the cause, and the end of all evil.

Thus the race of cursed Cham, not caring to retain God in their knowledge; nor, when they knew him, glorifying Him as God, He gave them over to a reprobate mind; and, becoming vain in their imaginations, they changed the glory of the Incorruptible God into an image, made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things; changing the truth of God into a lie;[1] and to what shameful, obscene, and unspeakable villanies, St. Paul gives us the catalogue at large.

Thus, at the beginning, some fond parent, doating on his dead child, might cause his image to be made and worshipped. Not that it was the first idolatry, but the first relating to the deifying or *apotheosis* of the dead, to honour the memory of some illustrious person, or such as were inventors of useful arts,—men of extraordinary ingenuity,—also conquerors, and captains, for

[1] Rom., i., 21, &c.

fear, or love; and such godlike heroes, as did them good, by defending their persons and country, and enacting wholesome laws. Thus Ninus, in honour of his father, Belus, erected his statue, and made it an asylum.[1]

But, leaving off this *Velamen*, they grossly made the figures of brute animals to represent the heavenly bodies and constellations. Not that the wiser amongst them really believed any such peculiar or divine virtue to reside in those representations, but as intimating the several attributes, effects, and powers of one Deity, under various names. For, not knowing what God's proper name was, they invoked Him by innumerable names. Still, the *Magna Mater*, or *Terra*, was esteemed mother of all the rest, for her plenty and exuberance.[2] Nay, Serapis's oracle to a Cyprian king declared himself to be the universe itself; that the stellated canopy was his head, the sea his belly, the earth his body, and the sun his eye. So that under the names of Ceres, Liber, Janus, Vulcan, Minerva, &c., they celebrated the justice, liberality, and knowledge of several useful arts and profitable inventions, which they were famous for.[3] We have the mention of some of them in Holy Scripture, for the invention of tents, minerals, and

[1] August. De Civit. Dei, l. 1. Amongst these was Saturn of the Phenicians; Astarte, who was worshipped in the planet Venus, Osiris, and sometimes a Phœnix, in the sun. Isis, and sometimes Apis, in the moon. For Mercury, Sirius, Noah in Janus, &c.

[2] O hominum Divûmque æterna Creatrix. Statius. Thebaid.

[3] Cic. De Nat. Deorum. See Lactant. De falsa Rel., c. 22.

works in iron, without which metal no other work could well be done; culture of ground, and husbandry, and the first mention of a liberal science, music, which, comprehending number and proportion, is of large extent. And these before the Flood. Thus Horace to Augustus,[1]

> Romulus, et Liber Pater, et cum Castore Pollux
> Post ingentia facta, Deorum in templa recepti.

To these add such as had skill in simples, drugs, and the *Materia Medica*; inventors of letters and hieroglyphics, astrology, and navigation. And because no art almost but uses fire and water, they worshipped Tubal-Cain or Vulcan, Neptune or Noah, &c., communicated, it is probable, with their religious rites, by the Egyptians to the Persians, Indians, Greeks; who had all from the Egyptians (however arrogating all these things to themselves) and the Romans, one after another.

SECTION II. IMAGE WORSHIP.

Now, as to images, in these early times, it is possible that idolatry was more ancient than even the worship of images themselves; which, some think, came not in till the deifying of dead men. For the Romans (as appears by Varro) were a hundred and seventy years before they had any such things amongst them. So that images did rather propagate idolatry than begin it. Nay, perhaps it was before painting or sculpture itself were celebrated arts; which, I suppose, were

[1] Ep., lib. ii., i. 5.

cultivated to advance and adorn it: it being so rude and bungling at first, that Pausanius tells us the Greeks did only worship great stones, made pointed at the top. Indeed, the pyramids and obelisks, as dedicated to the sun, and representing his rays, point to that *Heliolatria* we have been speaking of as so early in the world. And the learned Scaliger says, the Phenicians had the like custom of worshipping rude stones:[1] though, perhaps, from Jacob pouring oil on the column at Bethel, as a record of the true God, who is the Rock of Ages.

To these ceremonies the Romans added chaplets and crowns of flowers, and unction also; and thus might idolatry be more ancient than imagery. But whether for that cause Adrian built so many temples, without any images, I determine not. Some thought he intended to erect in them the statue of Christ, others his own effigy, either of which would yet have made it flat idolatry. But to proceed: to whom they set up statues and built temples, they soon added altars, sacrifices, flamens, priests, vestals, and other sacred officers. Nor were their gods of the same rank and dignity. They had their select deities, or *Dii Majorum Gentium*, who had ascendancy over the rest, which the wiser heathen did not take for several gods, but for their various offices and effects.[2] And indeed the Stoics, who held even the gods themselves to be mortals, affirmed that, when after many myriads of years they died, they went all into Jupiter. And some Platonists would have

[1] Emendation.

[2] S. Aug., De Civ. Dei, l. iv., c. 11.

every idea a god, and, if so, every idea of sin must be so too. In a word, *tot monstra, quot Jovis nomina.*[1]

But, besides these major deities, the Pagan theologists, affirming their inferior or lesser gods, who derived all their power from the greater, and were under their correction, had amongst them certain heroes, or consecrated souls and spirits, naturally separated from matter, whose office it was to mediate for mortals to the superior gods, and execute their orders. These had likewise both their temples, images, and altars. The greater were called Dii Superi, or Cœlestes; the lesser *Dæmones*, which Plato affirms were those middle spirits, that united mortals to the immortals, by putting up their prayers. And this doctrine they had from the Magi, Zoroaster, or haply from the Thracian Orpheus, Egypt, or Phrygia. Doubtless the same with those who now-a-days rank their saints and mediators among the lower deities. For so their *Divi* and *Divæ* come into the catalogue. And these Pagan Dæmons were the messengers and interpreters of the gods.[2]

In the mean time, Hesiod seems author of the first apotheosis. He tells us, that by a consult of Jupiter, the heroes, and famous persons of old, were, after death, or translation, rather, canonized and made the guardians and patrons of mortal men, and those they left behind —whose actions and lives they constantly inspected.[3]

[1] Arnob., 7.

[2] See Apuleius De Deo Socratis. Jamblicus De Mysteriis, and instar omnium St. Augustine, De Civ. Dei, lib. 8.

[3] Euseb. De Præp., lib. xiii., c. 9.

Thus the Platonists also would that every man had his Custos. To these they instituted feasts, which they called *Inferiæ, Parentalia, Parentationes, Novendialia,* &c., and sometimes the temples and altars of their heroes were their graves and sepulchres.

But, as was said, besides deified men and women, (for by this time godheads were so cheap, and men, not having where to choose better, deified one another) there was hardly a beast, cat or dog, fowl or fish, worm or reptile, tree or plant, which the Pagans did not abuse to superstition. The rivers and floods, woods and rocks and mountains, had their dryads, nymphs, satyrs, Pans, Naïades. Nilus and Ganges were worshipped by the Brachmins, fire by the Persians, as well as drought, air, and even all the elements. I say not only Jupiter, but every object they met with, (like the Indian Fetishes at this day) were, by some or other, made their God. And doubtless the ignorant sort of these infatuated souls believed them real deities. For what is it superstition cannot effect? We see it in some even at this day, who would be thought very wise and knowing. How was it else possible to conceive the Egyptians should be afraid of those grovelling plants, which they themselves planted, sowed, and cultivated in their gardens, and trod on in the fields? or of the stump of a fig-tree, or piece of an old gallows, or something molten out of a rusty kettle, cast and new hammered, a thing that might rot, be burnt, or melted again, be metamorphosed from a man to a mouse, or turned into any vessel for the vilest use, according to the artist's fancy!

A stock or head, into whose mouth a toad might creep, and spiders weave their webs, and worms consume! They knew from what dirty pit and quarry they had been hewn and dug, and yet implored help from that, which (as the Prophet most elegantly described) could not help itself, or move out of its place, to preserve itself from burning, or a thief.[1] They nailed or chained them to their stations, and yet feared them as omnipresent and almighty. Nay, they erected altars to diseases, to vicious passions, Fear, Envy, and Discord; as did both the Greeks, and those of Egypt. Of all which, see the excellent Minutius Octavius, deducing their pedigrees, several genealogies, and places of birth, burials, and epitaphs, and that even of their great Jupiter himself, father of all the rest: as well as of their impotency, and sordid vices, of which St. Augustine in his city of God.[2]

Juno, who should have been the most exemplary to the rest of her sex, was spiteful and jealous. Her husband, Jupiter, an adulterer and ravisher. Hercules grew frantic and burnt himself. Fortune was inconstant. They quarrel among themselves, they fight, nay, receive wounds, and bleed. Add to this, that some of them were calamitous. Saturn is laden with chains, Apollo lost his mistress, Ceres her daughter, Isis her son, Vulcan brake his thigh.

In a word, such absurd actions, childish and foolish tricks, are recorded of them by their own wittiest poets,

[1] Isaiah, xl., 19.

[2] Lib. 4., c. 5, and l. xviii., c. 13. Arnob., lib. iv.

satirists, and some great historians, as plainly betray their ridiculous worship.[1] So as it is to be wondered how such impertinences should prevail, as they did, in the world; or that wise and sober men should countenance it, and princes be at such cost to canonize and deify such base, lewd, and infamous debauchees, with divine honours, as so many gods and goddesses.

But thus had the god of this world blinded and infatuated men's eyes and minds, insulting over the image of the true God, to promote his own devilish worship. For though, as the apostle tells us, *an idol is nothing*, (namely, a thing which has no real existence) yet Satan, stepping into God's place, and usurping what belongs to no creature whatever, especially to so vile a one, makes every act of such worship, idolatry. So as those, who sacrificed to any of these representations, sacrificed not to God, but to devils. It is possible Aaron[2] did intend no such thing, when he set up the Golden Calf, as the worshipping it for the true God, but rather as under that similitude only, it being the figure of the cherub, which afterwards shadowed the Propitiatory. No more doubtless did Jeroboam; but merely to give the revolters a visible sign of God's presence, as described by Ezekiel's Vision. But this could be no excuse; the crime proceeding from their making any image whatever, to adore and worship it; though the worshipper esteem it but a senseless idol, a mere vanity.

[1] Diodor. Sic., l. i., 2, 4.

[2] Levit., xvii., 7; Deut., xxxiii., 17; I. Cor., x., 19, 20, 21.

God is a jealous God, and will have none to share in an honour, which is alone due to Him, and to no other. Nor yet that all images were unlawful, but the worshipping of the true God under an image; representing Him as a creature, which corrupts the imagination, and makes the superstition endless, and the rites so abominable, as there was no vice or villany, which was not practised in some of them.[1]

Add to these their ridiculous auguries, auspices, raking into the entrails of beasts, and observing the flying and chirping of birds for the event of every enterprise.

Their theatres and spectacles were always ushered in with processions of idols, displaying their banners, and crowning their figures with garlands, and the Temple-porches with fruits, festoons, and pompous shows; very much resembling what a Church does at this day imitate, which takes it ill to be charged with a gross superstition, as any of the Heathens. Let any one behold and consider the multitude of their shrines, statues, altars, pageants, temples, aspersions, bloody scourgings, and disciplines, lamps and candles at noon-day; their pompous vestments, apish and ridiculous gestures, dirges, dismal tone, and other innumerable fopperies copied from Pagan rites, and savouring more of the theatre, than of the sober and solemn and rational worship of the great God.

I cannot sufficiently, I say, wonder that the learned and knowing men of the Church of Rome should take

[1] S. August., De Civ. Dei, l. vii., c. 26.

such pains and write such volumes to propagate these impertinences, in an age so enlightened, and to the scandal not only of all good Christians, but even of Turks and Infidels. But the craftsmen have their living from these Dianas, and these have more than one goddess—they are innumerable; interceding not only for men and women only, but for pigs and poultry; invoked, censed, vowed, and pilgrimaged too, as the Heathen did.

They had likewise nuns and vestals, who looked after the sacred fire.[1] See their office described by Dionysius Halicarnassus, and their being permitted to marry after thirty years.[2]

The first we read of that brought images to Rome, was the superstitious Numa, as Cadmus into Greece. Varro confesses cities were before them, but, after that, so apprehensive were they of not having enough, that the statues of them were almost as many as of men. And lest the Greeks might disoblige some of the number through ignorance, the Athenians, we read, erected an altar to the God Unknown.

That they worshipped evil spirits in all this, many of themselves confess; and the Greeks called them *Cacodæmones*, the Persians Arimanes, and the Vejoves, and Averruncans of the Latins.[3] And, therefore, their

[1] Alex. ab Alexan., l. 5., c. 12; Plutarch in Camillo. Strabo., l. 6.

[2] The difference between these and the Christian virgins, see elegantly described by S. Ambrose in his answer to Symmachus, who wrote in their behalf to Valentinian and Theodosius.

[1] See Aul. Gell. Noc. Att., lib. v., c. 17.

oracles were no other than certain impure spirits, who, having been precipitated from their own glorious station into the darker regions, for their insolence, giving themselves to desperate malice, and the perdition of seduced man, sought, it is likely, to alleviate their calamitous condition, by bringing others into the same condemnation; suggesting whatever might contribute to it, by all possible allurements. For this effect, he who had before made use of the subtle serpent to seduce our first parents, makes use of images and idols now, to pervert their posterity. In these he sometimes uttered dubious responses; and, sometimes, as he endeavoured to tempt our blessed Saviour by texts of Scripture, and the undoubted oracles, so he now and then, to purchase reputation, spake truth, but such as mostly tended to mislead his devotees. And these were managed by crafty priests and priestesses, charms and enthusiasms, raising and kindling passions, diabolical lusts, and abominable actions. The *Python* lurking sometimes in the images themselves, and not seldom in his ministers.

Of these most renowned was the Delphic oracle, yet doubtful, uncertain, and for the most part so utterly false in his predictions, that *Ænomanus*, a famous philosopher and votary of their own, had written an express volume of their forgeries and impostures. And though they had been compelled to confess they were but devils, and no gods, which, as the light of a better religion arose, ceased and were put to silence; yet wizards and soothsayers undertook the trade, abusing credulous people, as yet they continue to do among the

blinded pagans, where the sun of righteousness has not yet appeared. Plainly St. Augustine tells them that devils possessed their idols.[1] And Leon, the Egyptian Archflamen, confessed as much in private to Alexander Magnus long before. Nor with less ingenuity Porphyry himself that their responses were in his time not only full of mistakes, but subject to lying.

In the mean time, never did Satan more discover the depth of his malice than by his pretended oracles, to which deluded men came from the farthest parts of the world. They frequently, as we noted, spake of the sublimest matters, wrapped up in mysterious expressions; and, to gain authority and reputation, would sometimes command the fear and love of the Deity, duty to parents, acts of justice, and the like.[2]

It was not then by the powers or blessings of their gods, but (as the impostor Mahomet) by their sword, barbarous sacrilege, and villanies, from the first foundation of their empire, that they conquered the world. Romulus laid the first stone of their city's walls in the blood of his own brother, and peopled it by a rape. All their riches and grandeur were but the product of their insatiable avarice, unjust invasions, and ambition. For

[1] S. Aug. De Civ. Dei, l. 8, c. 23.

[2] As to their predictions, people did not so much take notice of things, which did not come to pass, as of what succeeded, though they were as false, and seldom as their miracles. Consult Lactantius, comparing their pretended feats with what jugglers and hocus-pocuses performed, surpassing all the tricks of their Serapis, yea, and even of their Accius Nævius, and Claudia.

how could just Gods consent to aid and help them, whom they captived and dragged in chains after their triumph and chariots! But, granting that they sometimes were permitted to do a strange and unusual thing, for the further hardening and punition of their abominable idolatries and superstition, it was but just in God so to punish this stupid or affected ignorance, since they could not but condemn themselves, had they made use of that reason which distinguished them from beasts.[1]

SECTION III. PAGAN PHILOSOPHY.

Let us now then enquire what the philosophers' and wiser heathens' religion was, and what they further thought of all this folly. It is confessed, that there are many things in Plato, Seneca, Epictetus, and others, which some would reduce to rules of life, nay, beyond morality, even to principles of our Christian faith; as particularly concerning the Holy Trinity. But this was all tradition, derived from Pythagoras, by the familiarity he had with deceiving spirits, seeking to refine the Gentile idolatry and superstition into a more subtle way of adoring the Devil. And this being imitated by Simon Magus, Apollonius Thyaneus, and such impostors, produced that adoration of angels

[1] It is evident that neither Aristotle, Epicurus, Cicero, Seneca, nor any of the thinking sort (unless either to amuse the vulgar, or for political respects) believed what they professed. Cicero, treating of the nature of the gods, sufficiently shows the vanity of their numbers.

which the Scripture so often condemns.[1] And hence we shall find that even those excellent things, which the wiser Greeks and Romans have written of, our duty to God and men, proceeded from their being instructed, as best might serve the craft and purposes of Satan, to detain them in their other errors; the rest of what they published and taught being tainted with such positions and gross mistakes as cannot consist with the worship of the true God.

Let us take a short survey of the heathen sacrifices, and how nearly they imitated the Mosaical rites, that so the subtle spirit might draw away the people of God, under a show of no less sanctity and devotion.

No sooner had the priest led the victim to the altar, but he took hold of the stone, and, standing, prayed first to Janus and Vesta, who were still the principal numens in these rites, to make way for the higher powers.[2] Then was Jupiter called on with the rest. Then, lest anything should be omitted, there attended certain *custodes*, or *monitors*, who imposed silence to the company, and pipes were sounded, lest anything that was indecent, or of ill abode, might be heard.[3] The priest now begins the immolation, which was either some fruit, or a lump of meal, sprinkled with salt, and some grains of incense, which was laid on the head of the beast. After this, was poured wine out of an ewer. This they called *delibation*, and never omitted, first sprinkling, then casting it into the fire. This done, the

[1] Col., ii., 8. 23.

[2] Val. Max., l. i., c. 1.

[3] Panvinius De Fastis, and in 2 de Repub.

priest commands the victims, and other officers attending, to knock down and cut the throat of the creature; receiving the blood into vessels. Then they flayed off the skin, washed the flesh, and laid the fire in order. After this, the *aruspex flamen* and priest, raking the entrails, to see if anything were defective or redundant there. A portion of every member being cut off for *prelibation*, and rolled in flour, was burnt; which being consumed, the priests ate the rest with their jolly companions dancing about, and singing the praises of their gods to the noise of cymbals and other fantastic instruments.

Now, how these ceremonies answered the Levitical may be gathered from the ritual chapters of the Pentateuch.[1] Here we see how Satan, aping the Deity, did strive to imitate the prescribed sacrifices. So were they taught that the Divine justice was not to be appeased without the shedding of blood, prayers, and prostrations; erring only in the application to a false object, and mixing their devotions with unwarrantable rites and fancies of their own.

They farther held that, for the sin of man, man was to die. Hence Cæsar tells us the Gauls sacrificed their children, as those of Africa a Man to Saturn, after a more cruel manner. And so, of later times, what we read of Montezuma's idol in Mexico. Not that the wicked spirit induced his votaries to this unnatural superstition, in relation to the sacrifice of Christ, but, as we said, that he might place himself in his Father's

[1] Numbers, xv., xxviii. Deut., xxxii., &c.

throne, for which he was thrown down to Hell. For, as to this, or any other sort of sacrifice, did we well contemplate the idea of God, one could not easily be persuaded that the blood of beasts should reconcile us to His favour, or even that He had commanded such a service, till the Christian religion drew the curtains, and showed the reason of its typifying the offering of that Immaculate Lamb, who takes away the sins of the world.

In the mean time, it is the opinion of St. Augustine [1] that, since Almighty God would be honoured by sacrifice, He would have a sacrifice worthy of Him, and therefore of the most worthy of his creatures, man. That even in Paradise itself, as a Divine worship, so a sacrifice; namely, man himself, in innocence, offered himself,—that is, was ready and willing to have done it, as thinking nothing too precious for his Benefactor. But, after the Fall, there was no man worthy to be offered to him; but man himself stood in need of a pure victim, that might be sacrificed for him, and reconcile His justice. And, indeed, all the Jewish rites and ceremonies were but a continual prophecy of that which was afterwards to be done in the church; [2] and, therefore, were there so many sacrifices enjoined them, which signified only that Lamb of God, the great and pure oblation without spot.

To show what other adumbrations, or rather glimmerings, the heathen world had of the truth, in the midst of

[1] De Civ. Dei, l. x., c. 29.

[2] As we shall hereafter show, chapter xii.

so much error, is it not admirable to hear them discoursing of the depravedness of the human nature, the shame and misery of its condition? That man, contrary to all other creatures, had rather be covered with the skins and spoils of beasts, than expose his own nakedness! That the soul had once wings from Heaven, but had broken them![1]

The Orphean verses mention two Tables of a Decalogue; though, indeed, the two first commands of the first, and last of the second, were not known to them. To this add the wide spreading of circumcision, and opinion of the world's conflagration, to precede its inundation. That which Justin mentions of the Exodus of the Israelites out of Egypt,—Solinus, Diodorus, and others, of the destruction of Sodom, and several other Scripture passages, — their reverence to a kind of sabbath, or number seven. Our learned Andrews shows how all their best and most rational ceremonies flowed from the people of God; whilst tapers at noonday, and funeral obsequies, and worship of idols, were pagan customs; and even temples themselves were but sepulchres, whither people used to assemble, to call upon the memory of the dead. So the pontificate came to be translated from emperor to pope. They used imposition of hands, as in the ordinances of Numa. Their *linigeri* were a kind of surplices. We have an excommunication in Virgil. Nay, they had exhorta-

[1] So Plato, Trismegistus, and Hierocles, speak of the lapse of human kind, which Plotinus calls an impious rebellion.

tions and preaching in their assemblies.[1] They canonized renowned persons. They had their *ambarvalia*, or processions, in which they bore their images about, as prevalent for the averting of great calamities, and used the *kyrie eleëson* in their Litanies.[2] They observed Lents; dedicated first fruits, paid tithes to Apollo, had lustrations, holy water, and baptism. *Tingit et ipse fideles suos*, as Tertullian, speaking of the unclean spirits.

Further yet, the heathen had notices of the insupportable discord in man's upper faculties, and lower appetites, though they comprehended not from whence it proceeded. The more refined among them abhorred immoral actions, and taught that a pure and defecate mind was the best and most agreeable sacrifice. In what raptures of devotion they expressed themselves, Simplicius[3] has given a specimen.[4]

Thus God left not Himself in any age without testimony, nor man without a law, written in his heart, besides what he might every day have read in the Book of Nature. And, accordingly, some of them by this alone, and by observing the miseries their own depravedness brought them to, taught and lived excellently;

[1] See Valerius Maximus and Suetonius, who makes it a wonder that Tiberius Cæsar should offer sacrifice without it.

[2] Arrian. [3] Com. in Epict..

[4] Plato (in Rep.) says that the proof of a virtuous and just man appears in his sufferings—not merely being reviled, and stripped of all, but gibbeted and murdered ignominiously; and that such would be happy hereafter.

and had, as we all along have showed, profound and glorious notions of the Deity.[1] But, having all this by guess, or as fragments collected from the Hebrews, or patriarchal saints (amongst whom it is not unlikely they might converse as well before as after their descent into Egypt) they never had, or could have, any certainty of what they so took up. Nor did this arrive at any uniformity, or institution of established principles and worship; though Jamblicus has called it so, with the epithet of *divine*, pretending to revelation, where he says, "We know nothing of ourselves;" whilst he knew not when, or whence, neither agreeing in time, place, or testimony. They groped still in the dark, but could not find it by any light they had from above. And even Aristotle, Cicero, Seneca, and others of their most penetrating philosophers, lost themselves when they spake of another world. And though they held future rewards, punishments, and receptacles of immortality (if we may believe their books, deriding the follies of the vulgar), and certainly went as far into the search of truth as human nature, wit, and industry, are capable of, unassisted by revelation, and immediate light from Heaven; yet they did sacrifice with the people, and mingled in all their superstitions. The

[1] See the admirable piece of Tully in his Offices, Tusculans, and other grave discourses; with what Seneca, Plutarch, Xenophon, Plato, Epictetus, Antoninus, Maximus Tyrius, and other of the heathen have left behind, to condemn the more enlightened world who believe less, and live worse, than heathens. Of all which, Eusebius de Præp. Evang.

strictest sects among them, and even Socrates himself, used to be intemperately angry. Cato would be drunk at night: Seneca was extremely covetous: and some used secret and abominable lusts. War, force, and blood, were the effects of the much celebrated constitution among the Lacedemonians. They punished single murders, but desolated whole countries with the sword. And Aristotle asserts the lawfulness of killing barbarians. Rome itself came to its grandeur by bloodshed and rapine, unjust and causeless wars, as against Cyprus and Sardinia, by their own confession. Revenge they esteemed a virtue, and fed themselves with the fights of gladiators, cutting and mangling one another with the greatest cruelty, as a most delightful spectacle. The same notions among the Egyptians and Spartans permitted and encouraged thefts; and the Romans grew so great by it, that Cicero confesses, should they have restored what they wrongfully got, their state must return to their ruder cottages again.

The disputes they had about the *summum bonum*, the end and object they aspired to, Varro tells us amounted to no less than three hundred controversies; some placing it in the sensual pleasures of the present life, as the Epicureans; others in a sullen and feigned indolency, as Zeno and the stoics, which even stocks and stones may, after a sort, be said to enjoy as well as they. Others placed it in the knowledge of natural causes, contemplation, and polity, as the peripatetics; or, as Plato, in the union and conjunction with the Deity, without any terrene adherence. Nor, indeed, was it

Plato's alone; but even Aristotle himself, as he grew older and wiser, acknowledges, as we read he did, that God was the beginning, middle, and end of all—the alpha and omega.

Thus, some among the Gentiles came so near the truth, as it cannot be denied they served the True God in such virtuous lives, that our Blessed Lord tells his disciples, he found not greater faith, no, not in Israel. Such was the devout Cornelius, and another centurion; and the more honest stoics and Platonists. Nor this by chance or constitution only, but by cultivating such principles as produced in them virtuous habits and actions; in imitation of those perfections, which, by the light of nature, they acknowledge to be in the God of Nature. The Prince of the Peripatetics tells us the supreme good consisted in an active life, conforming to the rules of virtue. And it is affirmed, that his last words were an option that the *causa causarum* would have mercy on him; so as some divines of great note have conceived great hopes of the salvation of this learned philosopher, besides many others.[1] And though other less charitable reckoned all heroical virtues, without an actual sanctifying grace, but as *splendida peccata* (for so St. Augustine calls them); yet have divers, before this father, thought otherwise. God's especial grace co-operating with the light of nature, by which they might possibly be conducted to those virtues and

[1] Zuinglius and the knowing Erasmus were of that opinion. The learned Junius extends the salvation of Christ even to heathen infants. See his Treatise de Naturâ et Gratiâ.

good things, which were illustrious in them. Of this number, doubtless, we may count Job, Rahab, Ruth, &c., who were Gentiles. Nor do we find that God did wholly confine His gifts and favours to one people absolutely, or that He might not inwardly sanctify them, even at the last period. For as to that[1] of St. Peter, of there being no other name under Heaven given to men whereby they might be saved than that of Christ, it was spoken in relation to the times of the gospel, when our Blessed Lord, having broken down the partition-wall, the Gentiles were freely admitted;[2] and the gospel, being afterwards universally promulgated, the case was altered, and the very Jews, as well as heathen and Gentiles, left without excuse; God no longer winking at their former blindness and obstinacy, but expressly commanding men every where now to repent, as St. Paul tells the Athenians.[3]

Besides, whoever among the more religious Gentiles did attain this grace, we are to understand it as an emanation of the merits of Christ; though those who received it might not so clearly comprehend from whom, nor why: as neither do infants, the unbaptized, nor idiots. It is evident that the Jews and all the world were, about this time of our Blessed Saviour's coming into the world, so monstrously wicked, malicious, ungrateful, and universally perverted, that they had, doubtless, been swept away with some universal calamity, had not the Holy Jesus come at this fulness of time, when they were so ripe for destruction, to make

[1] Acts, iv., 12. [2] Acts, x., 14. [3] Acts, xvii., 30.

propitiation; and by His doctrine, example, and miracles, reform the depraved age. Add to this the Gentiles, as well as others, lying under an obligation of using certain means. Some of them were pious and devout persons, full of love to God; and it is hard to judge that any such should perish for the sin of Adam merely, or their not being exactly conformable to the first law; but for refusing or abusing some mercy purchased by Christ. It is, however, certain that the grace of Christ is absolutely necessary to repentance and sanctity, whatever the necessity of the knowledge of His incarnation, and other mysteries of His institution be.

Nor all this while was the merciful God wanting, I say, even to the farthest heathen world; so as to keep from them the knowledge of doing as much as He expected from them in their present state;[1] and as to the rendering them capable of some inferior strictures and degrees of happiness to come. Since to whom little is given, of them little will be required.[2]

They had all the laws of Nature written in their hearts, though they could not guess at the method God used, to bring them to the true religion. And that the Pagan world had these assistances, Tertullian proves out of their own confessions; so that most who perished might accuse their own wilfulness. They had, besides, no obscure hints from the sybils' prophesying, in divers places, among the heathen; if, at least, there were such

[1] Acts, xiv., 17. Rom.. ii., 14, 15—i., 18.

[2] Luke, xii., 48.

early glimmerings; though, I confess, few of the ancient philosophers had seen their writings, so carefully reserved by the Romans in the archives of the capital, as Lactantius tells us.[1]

CONCLUSION.

We have showed how infirm the religion of the heathen was, and how far short it came of perfection; supported, as best it was, by Pythagoras and his followers: neither did any other sect attain to any solid truth beyond conjecture. They who thought they came nearest, held that God, or some sublime being, which they called the mind, pervaded all the parts of matter, as the soul the body,—and so made the universe a kind of rational animal. By this philosopher, every fly and insect must be divine, as they were parts of matter. Some of them were so senseless as to think the fortuitous motion of senseless matter should proceed to a habit of acting so wisely and regularly as to produce this goodly system.

That man is no other than a dismal, forlorn creature, composed of the same nonsense matter, without providence,—and that there was nothing framed for use, but as things and consequences happened;—that the plastic nature, or soul of the world, or (as Parmenides calls it) Love, as a secondary created Deity, before whose production necessity reigned,—that is, in better

[1] L. i., c. 6.

theology, before the Spirit of God moved on the chaos, and educed this orderly system,—unguided by any order or providence necessitated that motion of matter which produced the world.

Nor was the crime of Socrates, as it is commonly reported, his asserting the unity of the Deity (for he held all the constellations to be gods), but for reproaching his countrymen for making them authors of such prodigious lusts, intemperance, parricide, and other abominable actions. There was, in truth, nothing almost in nature which they did not ascribe Divine power to; no, not so much as a wish or imagination; so far had wild and endless superstition prevailed upon mankind. Thus, Symmachus took mighty pains and made orations to have persuaded that excellent emperor, Theodosius, to erect a pompous altar to Victory — using this for argument, that none should refuse to worship what he wished for.

Thus, it has abundantly been shown how far remote they were from any satisfactory and settled opinions, either about God, or the world. And, consequently, their religion was the same. Nor find we any of the most zealous abettors of the Orphean and Gentile philology, Porphyry, Hierocles, Celsus, and the rest, who could produce any valid reply to Origen, Justin Martyr, Arnobius, Minutius, and those other Christian apologists who contended with them.

As for Julian, his fantastic singularities were out of monstrous pride and opinion of his own pedantic learning; being, at last, become so very insupportably inso-

lent, as to fancy himself the great Alexander, by a transmigration of that hero's soul into him.

Celsus was an Epicurean atheist, and it angered him to the heart there should appear a doctrine which should overthrow the security of being exempt from all impunity after a flagitious life. Whilst, after all, I find not one of them who either did or could deny the miracles ascribed to our Blessed Saviour, or that there was such a person. But, whenever they were pinched upon those undeniable matters of fact, they said it was his skill in magic, and I know not what.

To conclude—The religion of the Gentiles was, as we have showed, either taught or framed to voluptuousness, flattery, uncleanness, cruelty, poetic fictions, to fear and passion, ambition, pride, pomp, and vain-glory, and to support their tyranny (for which men, whose breath is in their nostrils, would be reputed gods), or to curiosity, vain philosophy, and gnosticism. Speculative men were fond of their opinions; and politicians had secular ends to serve, as well as the crafty and avaricious priests, who governed the ignorant, managed the oracles, and abused them all. And though something they did to advance morality, it was but amongst the few, and but for human, variable, and vain-glorious ends. This we find in the best of them — Cicero, Seneca, Plutarch, full of excellent precepts and documents as they are; yet betraying self-conceit, praise, and affectation. Plato, who approached nearest to the truth, durst communicate his sentiments to a few only of his intimates; and Socrates, dying, knew not whi-

ther he went. The most sublime of Epictetus's religious discourses tend only to render their *wise man* consummate in the moral virtues, to which yet the most perfect of them could not attain.

Besides, the very best of these *sapient* men pretended no virtue from their gods, who were proved to be more wicked than men. And, therefore, had recourse to Virtue, which they celebrated not as a goddess, but for her own self. This was still but a kind of idolatry; seeing God being the only great and sublime principle of our duty and obligation, real virtue is not communicable, but as it relates to His perfections and commands alone,—and not for the sake of any other whatsoever. With all this, the Gentile religion had little or no inspection into the heart, nor took cognizance of thoughts, speculative lusts, and other crimes, which they did not put into the catalogue of sins. Nor esteemed they humility a virtue; vain-glory and the praise of men was the utmost end of all their labour, as Cicero ingenuously confesses.[1] And so, Aristotle places all felicity in the perfections of the mind and body, but this only as it respects man in his present state. And were it true, yet were it not obtainable here, since there is no single person who could possibly expect such an entire union of all just perfections in himself, as are not to be found in all men altogether. They prayed the gods for health of their bodies, but not to better their minds, and make them virtuous: *that* they affirmed that they could do of themselves, without him.

[1] Pro Archia Poetâ.

As to the stoical happy man upon the rack, and in Phalaris's bull, with all his exalted virtue, what more ridiculous? Heaven and Hell by this are made the same indolency and stupid senselessness with cruciating pain: but, *who can dwell with everlasting burnings?* Verily, the notion is quite against humanity, since the union of the natural good is absolutely requisite to the moral; but the knowledge of this is, as we have shown, clouded with doubts. Epicurus' sensual pleasure was exploded, as relating only to this present life, and what is so can neither be true felicity nor true religion. It is, therefore, no longer strange, that so many wise and learned philosophers, with all their deep speculations and reasonings, could not lead one city to the knowledge of the true God; or so much as gather a few disciples to embrace and practise the virtues which they taught. Plotinus, with all the favour of the empire (Galienus and his empress having a project of founding a Platopolis, where all the laws of that philosopher should be taught and professed), could never effect what yet our blessed Lord did, not only without all human aid and assistance, but against the greatest contradictions, discouragement, and opposition imaginable, both of learned and unlearned adversaries,—men and devils,—establishing His holy religion in so short a time, with such mean and unlikely instruments; and so universally, as all those great geniuses, with all their pretences to virtue, could never accomplish. So great is the truth, and it will prevail.

Thus was philosophy, the religion of the wiser

Gentiles, as the law of the Decalogue to the Jews. But God's law had been sufficient to render both happy; nor would their precepts, we see, with all their acquired learning, lead them to the perfection and sovereign good, which they so earnestly sought. We do not yet, as we have said, pronounce peremptorily concerning the absolute evil state of those who amongst them endeavoured to live up to the principles of the moral virtues; it being certain it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah; much more for those honest heathen, than for wicked and dissolute Christians. Besides, we find not that all, even under the Mosaic dispensation, had faith in the death and merits of Christ for the remission of sins. The disciples of our blessed Lord themselves had none, till after His resurrection from the dead. The Jews themselves, rigid as they were, had charitable thoughts of the proselytes of the gate, and those who observed the seven precepts of the sons of Noah. And, above all, the gracious God has ways and methods of salvation that we know not of, and which are past finding out. Add to this, that there was very little concerning the attributes of God, His creation, government of the world, &c., contained now in the Old Testament, believed by Abraham and the patriarchs, but what we have shown to have been owned and acknowledged by the virtuous and learned Gentiles. Nor is there any excellency in whatever the Greeks, Romans, and other nations, wits and philosophers, have written, but what is contained and infinitely refined and improved in the Christian doctrine.

In all events, God is just and infinitely good to all; and the merits of Christ of as infinite extent, and His mercies over all His works. How deficient the heathen were in all the parts of the true worship,—how full of superstition and idolatry, pride and vanity, and inconstancy, this chapter has sufficiently declared. Whereas, the *true* religion is ever the same, invariable, and like itself in every part,—speaks only of God,—regards nothing but God,—receives all from God alone, attributes all to God, namely, body, soul, words, yea, even our thoughts, actions, passions, yea, life itself; all its revelations tending only to His glory.

Moreover, the true religion does not flatter, is not sensual, but curbs and contradicts our vicious and most endeared appetites and inclinations,—roots up injustice, avarice, pride, and passion, and the rest of our corruptions,—does not nourish vain curiosity, polity, or worldly craft,—but, being pure and simple, loves and embraces virtue for the love of God.

The books and oracles that teach us the true religion, in a long and ample consequence of holy authors, writing and living in such distance of time, yet leave us no trace of human passion or interest, but such as breathe of piety and all the evangelical graces: and yet, speaking with the highest authority and assurance, have no end but the glory of God. Their writings are not affected, nor set off, and refined with rhetorical flourishes,—her rites are not pompous, nor service theatrical, to allure; but simple, vulgar, and adapted to the meanest capacity, in things of most necessary con-

cern; and yet none more sublime, none more grave and majestical.

Now, since it was not possible the heathen, learned as they were, yet blinded by such gross superstition, should ever have emerged out of those prejudices, without some brighter light than that of mere nature,—without some supernatural means,—Almighty God, who would not altogether abandon His poor creatures to Satan's implacable malice, as appears by His continued kindnesses, to glorify the riches of His grace, and lest the world should be totally corrupted, and for the accomplishment of His own most wise and eternal purpose, was pleased to reveal His mind, show us the way to the true and sovereign good, by giving the world a more clear and bright idea of Himself, with rules by which to govern ourselves in all capacities, and in doctrine, agreeable to the dictates of reason, and the dignity of our nature. And this doctrine He has confirmed by miracles, and other convincing circumstances, as we are now come to show in the following chapter.

That we have mentioned little of the Gentiles of this day, spread over divers parts of the known, and universally over the unknown world, has been, for that we find hardly any of their superstitions and opinions of the Deity more extravagant than that of the ancient pagans; all alike irrational and inconsistent with the worship of the true God. The Mahometan Impostor has mixed divers Christian tenets with the Jew and Gentile; and though worshipping but one God, yet the

laws of that religion are a rhapsody of egregious nonsense—that of the Brachmins, in Persia and Mogul country, fragments of the ancient Pythagorean. The rest are purely Gentile, or, more plainly, barbarous,—even the most civilized among them, as the Chinese, Incas of Peru, and some other. And of the merely *Ethnic*, their religions are so various and extravagant that, not being worthy the consideration of rational men, we have not thought it necessary to enlarge upon them. Such we reckon the savages of Brazil, and other parts of America, Samojetia, Indian, Japonian, Siamese, inward Africa, Arabia, &c.[1] Only it is observable, that most religions believed that suffering and difficulties were necessary to obtain happiness. Witness the chains, uneasy postures, cruel sacrifices, fasts, severe lives of the Indians, Turks, &c.,—lancings, burnings, pulling out of their own eyes, on sight of Mecca!—How gentle the Christian religion, which teaches only to bear afflictions when sent us! Not to force them on ourselves, unless such as are useful as medicines and remedies to keep exorbitances under, our sabbaths spiritual, and the like. *Veritatem religio quærit.*[2] To conclude with the Collect for Good Friday:

"Oh, merciful God, who hast made all men, and hatest nothing that Thou hast made, nor wouldest the

[1] Those who are curious, may read of these in the relations of Paul Venetus, Leo, Purchas, Gage, Hackluyt, Kircher, Shirley, Tavernier, Thevenot, Sandys, M. Jardin, Tachard, and divers others.

[2] "The end and aim of religion is truth."

death of a sinner; but rather that he should be converted and live; have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics, and take from them all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of Thy word; and so fetch them home, blessed Lord, to Thy flock, that they may be saved among the remnant of the true Israelites, and be made one fold under one Shepherd, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end, Amen!"

CHAPTER VII.

OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES AND ORACLES OF GOD, WHICH SHOW US THE TRUE SUPERNATURAL RELIGION AND SOVEREIGN GOOD.

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SECTION I.[1]

If there be a God, a world created by Him, rational creatures, and souls immortal in it; an all-disposing

[1] Consult Judge Hale's Chief End of Man. Thesis., ii.. p. 20. Contemplations, Part II.

Providence that governs; if there be a future state after this life, an account to be given how men have behaved themselves in the present state; if there be rewards to the good, and punishments for the wicked, and that to this great God is due religious worship, and among the many pretences to this worship, but one true and acceptable way, the next thing to be enquired after, is by whom, where, and how, we may come to the certain knowledge of it. In a word, to know how this God will be served, and what that law and those commands are, which His creature is to observe and obey, as a rule to walk by, and his real interest so to do.

Now, natural religion, as we have shown, teaching us that there is a God, who is a just, holy, eternal, wise, and Omnipotent Being, that after this short race of ours there is a life to come, where all our actions will be severely examined, and rewards accordingly distributed, nay, that the whole mass of mankind being depraved and indisposed to the end, for which, as rational creatures, we were put into the world; namely, to glorify God by our conformity to His perfections, as the Supreme and Sovereign God, but which Nature only so depraved cannot lead us to, it follows, that there is then a further supernatural religion, and revelation necessary, whereby we may come to the knowledge of the Divine pleasure: and how, by guiding and governing our actions, we may arrive nearer that original rectitude, and, consequently, nearer to that happy and desirable condition and Sovereign Good we aspire to.

Now that is the only true and supernatural religion, which is able to work in our natures such graces as qualify us for that blessed state. And to find out this has ever been, and yet is, the grand inquiry, and controversy of the world. Though, in the mean time, so infinitely merciful has the Creator been to His creature, that, as Moses tells the Israelites, this word and will of His is neither *hid, nor far from any of us; not in Heaven, that we should say, Who shall go up thither, to bring it down to us, that we may hear and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that we should say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us? But the Word is very nigh unto us, even in our mouth and heart.*[1] To the same effect St. Paul[2] speaking, not of the law (as did Moses) which concerned the Jews only, but of the righteousness of faith, or religion, which the Apostles preached; and is that word of life, that Divine revelation, which is not repugnant to the light of Nature, but which perfects and supplies its defects: since though by that alone we may come to the knowledge that there is a God, and therefore to be worshipped, yet does it not teach us how, and in what manner, He is to be adored and served; which only the Scriptures do.

It is then our great concern seriously to examine the truth of those Divine records, and accurately to search them; seeing in them it is we hope to have eternal life: these are they which testify of God, as dictated alone by the Spirit of God; and therefore, lest we should be imposed on, by believing pretended spirits,

[1] Deut., xxx., 11, 12, 13, 14. [2] Rom., x., 6, 7.

we are to try the spirits, whether they be of God. For (as St. John[1] has warned us) there are many deceivers gone out into the world, such false Apostles,[2] and deceitful workers, and other impostors; whereas, if an angel from Heaven itself should teach any other religion than what the Scriptures teach, so far from being received or hearkened to, he is to be accursed.[3]

I. SCRIPTURES.

By the Scripture we understand those Sacred Volumes, which contain those lively oracles, immediately received from God, the great Legislator; containing the several treaties and contracts that have been made between God and man; and teach the true principles of that faith and supernatural religion which leads to eternal happiness. The Scriptures, I say, are those writings which declare the whole will of God and the mysteries of salvation.[4]

It is called *the Word of God*, because they were first spoken by Him; and *Scriptures*, as being written by those who heard it. Nor this by the will and contrivance of man, cunningly devised for secular purposes and worldly interest, but as holy men spake and writ what they heard, or as was agreeable to what they heard, or as moved and inspired by the Holy Ghost.[5] For God, who at sundry times and in divers places, speaking in times past unto the Fathers by the Pro-

[1] I. John, iv., 1. [2] S. Matt., xxiv., 11-15; II. Cor., xi., 13.
[3] Gal., i., 8. [4] I. Tim., iii., 16.
[5] II. Pet., i., 16-21; II. Tim., iii., 16.

phets, has in these latter times spoken unto us by His Son.[1] Hence we learn

2. Who is the Author of them, namely, the Eternal God, by Him whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He (that is, God the Father) made the worlds.[1] Who is the brightness of His glory, the express image of His person, upholding all things by the word of His power[2]. And what this Author spake has been confirmed by those who heard him, namely:

3. The Holy Penmen.[3] To these God also bore witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to His own will. By these various *manners* may safely be understood the ministry of holy angels, the prophets, voices, urim and thummim, dreams, visions, and the like. These were the means by which it pleased God to reveal His mind; especially after the time of Moses, who is said to hear God speak face to face[4]) that is familiarly not in dreams, or by other mediation); since, before this, the long-lived patriarchs might not only receive the oracles of God by tradition from their ancestors, and so had no need of committing them to writing. But, when men's lives were abbreviated for their passing them so wickedly; and, consequently, their memory impaired, and generations spread and separated, and that governors and governments

[1] Heb., i., 1; Luke, i., 70. [2] Heb., i., 1-4.

[3] Ἁγιογράφοι.

[4] Exod., xxxiii., 11; Num., vii., 89; xii. 8.

were changed, which must needs corrupt former tradition, and likewise to prevent the impostures of atheists and heretics, it pleased God to order, that both the history of the creation, church, and laws, should be committed to writing. Some of it, namely, the Decalogue, He wrote with His own finger upon tables of stone; then by the *Hagiographi*, Moses, and the Prophets; and, lastly, by the *Theodidacti*, the Apostles, and Evangelists, from the mouth of Christ Himself, and the inspiration and impulse of His Holy Spirit. For that it should be from any other; or, that the doctrine contained in the Sacred Volumes was propagated upon the score of any secular interest of the penmen, (whatsoever opportunities they may have had to do it) will be sufficiently disproved if we consider the persons and characters of even the greatest and most conspicuous of them, Moses, Samuel, Elias, Jeremiah, and the rest, of whom we read in the Old Testament. The first from an adopted prince, reputed son of Pharaoh's daughter, educated in that great court, abandons it all, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season.[1] What his troubles and difficulties were, to manage the charge God had imposed on him, among a stiff-necked and most perverse people, we may read at large in the histories of Exodus, Numbers, &c. Samuel had likewise to deal with the same discontented nation. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and most of the rest, after all the difficulties they went through for warning the princes

[1] Heb., xi., 24, 25, 26.

and people of their sins, were either persecuted, imprisoned, or murdered. And then for the penmen of the New Testament, the Holy Apostles and Evangelists, we find not above one of them all who came to a natural death. And (to use the words of the author to the Hebrews) others had trial of cruel mockings, and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonments; they were stoned, they were sawn in sunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented.[1] And those, of whom the world was not worthy for their exemplary virtue and piety, St. Paul tells us, in another place, were counted as the filth and offscouring of the world, suffered the loss of all things, in stripes, tumults, labours, watchings, fastings.[2]

And, indeed, both for their callings, as well as persons, they were most of them poor herdsmen, or ignorant fishermen; and who were to teach and profess a religion, which they were sure was so little advantageous to their worldly interest, that (as was foretold them) it would not only expose them to the loss of the little they had, but of their lives, and all that could be dear to them in this world. In short, they were counted so many madmen, that in such circumstances (for besides this they were very illiterate and simple, many of them) they should hope to plant a religion, which spake of nothing but suffering, contempt, and

[1] Heb., xi., 36, 37, 38.

[2] I. Cor., iv., 10-13; II. Cor., xi., 23-33.

scorn, that should prevail over a voluptuous and abandoned age. But thus they preached through countries, cities, courts, not sparing kings themselves.

What impostor could write such a book? What a madness were it to imagine that the most admirable writings, and designed to persuade to the love of God and our neighbours, to inspire zeal and goodness, should be supported by impostors, without any design of interest to the authors! Consider we, then, that all they writ savoured of the greatest innocency and candour imaginable, breathing of piety, zeal, and holiness; dissembling nothing, but confessing and recording even their own faults and weaknesses, with all their lessening circumstances; and distinguishing the dictates of their own reasonings from that of the sacred spirit;[1] leaving several instances of their sincerity, as may be farther seen in the life of Moses, Daniel, Jeremiah, St. Paul, and others.

Besides, it seems not only very unlikely, but almost wholly impossible, that so many humble, holy, and unconcerned men, living at such distances of times and places, should universally agree to deceive both themselves and all their relations, posterity, and all ages since, for no manner of advantage, but to the manifest endangering of their own lives and liberties, had not the authors been both divinely inspired and assisted.

That they pretended no worldly consideration, is farther manifest, not only by what they suffered, while their Divine Master was conversant amongst them; but

[1] I. Cor., vii., 6.

by their persisting to propagate His doctrine, after He was departed from them: and all their hopes and expectations of earthly felicity vanished with Him, whilst they fancied it had been He who should have redeemed Israel, and restored it to its former splendour.[1] Far from this, He tells them they must look for no such matter here, but, on the contrary, that they should be scorned, plundered, enslaved, betrayed by their nearest relations, put to death and persecuted with that exceeding rage; and men should think they did God good service to kill and murder them.[2] For all this they desisted not preaching and publishing what they writ. What could be more ingenuous, more disinterested, with greater proof of the unparalleled sincerity of the writers, and of the truth of what they taught?

Lastly, who is it that doubts that Aristotle, Cæsar, Cicero, Livy, Plutarch, and the rest of those famous men, were authors and writers of those books which go under their names; whilst none of them can show such ample testimony as the Scriptures that they were penned by those whose titles they bear? And whether they were the works of those persons, in every paragraph, does not so nearly concern mankind as those Holy Oracles do, namely, the eternal salvation of our souls. And therefore it is they have been so diligently kept and examined. There are controversies about profane authors and books, yet of whom have we heard that would suffer martyrdom to assert them. Had any of the books of Scripture been supposititious, how comes

[1] Luke, xxiv., 21. [2] Acts, xxvi., 10, 11, 12.

it that no such doubt appeared from any living in their author's time, or soon after? That two or three epistles of the New Testament raise some scruple, is an evident proof of the authenticity of all the rest. It is certain they were penned before the destruction of Jerusalem. And in all the disputes of the orthodox against the heresies of the Gnostics, Millenarians, Arians, the controversy about Easter, which so sadly divided the Church, and appeared so early, none of them yet questioned a book of Holy Scriptures; nor could any have corrupted them, but we should have heard of it by their adversaries. And, lastly, supposing mistakes of scribes, and various readings, yet so has the Providence of God conducted it that no essential part of religion is weakened by them. Yea, put case all the copies were lost, yet have we most, if not all, entirely recited by one or other of the Fathers, and critical writers, citing them upon occasion.

Thus, for the persons of the penmen. The next argument of the veracity of the Sacred Books is in prophecy.

SECTION II. THE SCRIPTURES ASSERTED TO BE THE ORACLES OF GOD.

I. BY PROPHECIES.

We do not intend by *prophecy* here the means whereby revealed truth has been conveyed and revealed to us:[1]

[1] The learned Mr. Smith has copiously treated of this in his Discourses out of the Rabbins, in thirteen chapters.

nor mean we only what St. Peter calls *a more sure word of prophecy*;[1] but the wonderful fulfilling and accomplishment of what the Scriptures have foretold should come to pass; and which, for having punctually so happened, is another pregnant and undeniable proof of its being celestial and divine. Thus, to Adam, Abraham, Israel, and many more, was promised the Messias. Consider, too, with what consideration the divided land was prepared with laws and constitutions so many years before they entered Canaan, and then with how high a hand and what success; and what happened to Jacob's offspring according to the predictions,[2]—what, also, after Moses befel them for idolatry.[3] Here will come in the re-building of Jericho.[4] The naming of Josias three hundred years before he was born.[5] And that Cyrus should deliver captived Israel,[6] and re-build the demolished Temple, against all appearance, at the very period of seventy years,[7] a hundred before that prince appeared. In like manner, the famous prophecy of Daniel concerning the Persian, Greek, and Roman monarchies, with other predictions of what should happen in the later times, yet every day fulfilling. Not to insist on Hosea, Zachariah, and the rest of the minor prophets—*That the glory of the latter Temple should be greater than the former*,[8] and fulfilled in the Messias.[9] What action happened in our Blessed

[1] II. Pet., i., 19. [2] Gen., xlix. [3] Deut., xxxii.
[4] Josh. iv., 26. Compare I. Kings, xvi., 34.
[5] I. Kings, xiii., 2. [6] Isaiah, xlv., 1.
[7] Jer., xxv., 12. [8] Hagg., ii., 9. [9] Luke, ii., 22.

Saviour's life on earth which was not foretold by David, Isaiah, Zacharias, Daniel, and other prophets; together with the cutting off the Gentiles, rejection of the Jewish Temple, metropolis, nation, in so stupendous a manner as to continue an execration to this very day.[1] Lastly, that so many prophets should rise amongst them, till Christ, who was to be the scope and end of all that went before, should come; and not so much as one should ever since appear to give them any hope or consolation—now almost seventeen hundred years.

All which, computed and happening since the canon of the Scriptures has been finished, are irrefragable proofs of its being the word of God.

From these, we come to that of *Miracles*.

2. MIRACLES.

Miracles, the event of prophecies, were performed, not only by the Almighty Author, but by his ministers, penmen, and prophets. Our Blessed Lord wrought more in one year (and, I think, in one day) than did all who went before or ever since. By these such multitudes were converted, churches gathered, many years before any Scriptures were extant, as now they are; the Christian religion was asserted, and also by the sudden ceasing of Satan's oracles, and silence of his lying spirits; the conversion of whole nations to the faith,

[1] Eusebius has so fully treated of those innumerable texts, through all the prophets, in his second book, "De Dem. Evang.," that there is nothing more evident.

effected without any external force of arms, eloquence, or human wisdom, but by plain words and the foolishness of preaching (as esteemed), and the most contrary means to attain any thing men aim at, that can be imagined; the greatest empires were subdued; princes' sceptres made to stoop to the ignominious cross; and all the pompous Pagan rites, that had reigned so many ages, and prevailed upon the blinded world, crumbled to nothing in a moment, as it were, after our Blessed Saviour's Ascension. The little stone hewn out of the mountain without hands, the doctrine of the despised Jesus, and of a dozen poor fishermen,— suffering martyrs, and constant confessors,—without weapon, or what the world calls wit, overthrew the politics of statesmen, the subtlety of philosophers, and all the wisdom of the wise.

Consider the prodigious change this word of God, these holy books, made in the world, when it pleased Him to call the Gentiles to the knowledge of them. In all countries, in all ages, sexes, and conditions of men, it gave courage and strength to the weak and fearful; so as little children and tender virgins have braved the most exquisite tortures, rather than depart a little from the faith. It was no sooner published than it fermented like the leaven our Saviour speaks of in the lump. The seed was no sooner sown but it sprung up like corn in a hundredfold, and of a small grain, as of mustard-seed, became a tree, spreading its branches over the whole earth. It pierced, like lightning, both for swiftness and irresistible force, so as, Tertullian tells us, it en-

tered castles, cities, camps, palaces, senates, schools, and private houses, like the sunbeams, and nothing was hid from the heat thereof, its light and operation. This powerful and Divine Word healed diseases, raised the dead, enlightened the blind, cleansed the leper, infused supernatural knowledge, gave gifts to men, gifts of strange tongues, whereby it was propagated through all nations; gifts of interpretation of tongues, gifts of working miracles, of discerning spirits, of casting out devils.

In a word, it reformed the most obstinate and incredulous sinners; raised the humble and dejected, fortified the faint and weak, pulled down the mighty; and that which was supported by laws and edicts, the heathen superstition, though fortified by arms, cemented by interest, and maintained by subtle arguments of human wisdom, and all the cunning of the devil, which, for so many thousand years, had taken possession, fell, like Dagon before the ark, to flatness and nothing. For the word of God is sharp as a two-edged sword, to the dividing in sunder of the soul and spirit, the joints and the marrow, discerning the very thoughts and intentions of the heart.[1] Finally, it is to those who duly receive it the power of God to salvation.

Now, as to this extraordinary gift of miracles by virtue of this Word, and those who propagated the faith, we read of many whom our Blessed Lord and His apostles had healed and raised from the dead, who lived

[1] Heb., iv., 12.

to confirm it to them, till near Trajan's reign.[1] And even the story of Agbarus of Edessa, as related by Eusebius, that our Blessed Saviour, being addressed by letter, sent Thaddeus to cure him, (though not so expressly named in the Gospel) has nothing in it which can justly be reproved; that grave Author affirming that he found the passage in a record at Edessa, in the Syrian tongue, and translated it into Greek. This is likewise attested by St. Ephrem, and so abundantly cleared to be a truth by the learned Valesius, and others, as admits of no further doubt. And such miraculous and supernatural gifts remained long after among the faithful, as long as it was necessary; namely, till the Gospel had become universally planted and received; its sound going into all lands.

Justin Martyr, who suffered 165 years after Christ, and Irenæus (A.D. 206) assure us that the gifts of prophecy, tongues, and healing remained even to their times; mentioning, also, the ejection of devils, and the raising of the dead. As to their since being ceased or very rare, a plain and full reason is given by an apostle himself, where he tells us that miracles are for them who do not believe, not for those who do, and are already converted. Nor is it reasonable that the universal laws and ordinances of Nature, and in their course, should, without great and urgent cause, be changed for the humour of every petulant sceptic, when there is already sufficient

[1] So Quadratus (A. D. 127), a disciple of the Apostles, affirms in his Apology to the Emperor Adrian, which stopped the persecution against the Christians.

evidence to oblige our belief. Were it otherwise, every individual person, to the end of the world, must have, forsooth, the miracle shown, to gain his assent to what all his forefathers, for so long a tract of time, had believed. This were to make cheap the wonderful works of God, and they would cease to be miracles.

Besides, as for miracles ruining the truth of things, they are still but extrinsical, and would be invalid without that self-evident impression of the same Divine power, wisdom, and goodness of God, intrinsically effecting a holy life. Besides, whatever doctrine or religion consists in believing things future, absent, and invisible, is to be known and maintained by faith in Divine Revelation, and not altogether by immediate and sensible evidence only, or mere discourse.

In the mean while, all true Christians have a kind of internal knowledge, from the faithfulness of the truth and purity of the Gospel, and their more illuminated, quickened, and sanctified souls, to attest the Divine Truth. Indeed, to prove the Scripture by this alone, one cannot avoid the circle; since they who would assert truth by testimony of the Holy Scriptures cannot prove the Trinity but by the Scripture. How should infidels be converted, who have not the means to attain these proofs? Therefore, to convince them has God ordained miracles. Notwithstanding, as to us, such a degree of faith as powerfully operates on our lives is to be imputed by us, no less than by them, to the grace of God alone, and to His Holy Spirit; though not as working always and immediately, but in rendering the means

effective. And if this be only human faith, proceeding from natural certainty, what can be divine?—since man can but certainly believe a thing to be truth, and so believe as to live accordingly. If there be a moral belief, let men show a more convincing.

A *third* assertion of the undoubted truth of Scriptures is their wonderful preservation.

3. PRESERVATION.

The Jews would die a thousand deaths rather than depart one jot or tittle from their law. And the whole body of the Levites were, therefore, the guardians of the Holy Books, which were no less than seven times read over, yearly; an express injunction prohibiting any the least addition or dimunition, notwithstanding the changes, divisions, separations, captivities, sects, schisms, and other disturbances among them, during so long a tract of time. They carried them wherever they went, distributed innumerable copies, most accurately examined (even to the number of the very letters and their places, how oft soever they occurred), so as it is not imaginable they should be universally corrupted. Nay, so careful has been the Divine Author to preserve those sacred fountains pure (a drop of which is never to fail or pass away), that Providence so ordered it, that the Jews themselves, who were so long their depositories, have not perverted so much as one of those texts, which so plainly speak of the coming of the Messiah, whom their fathers crucified.[1]

[1] See Mr. Thorndike's Epilogue.

How is it to be imagined that a people, so dispersed, errant, without leader, country, priest, or prophet (nay, without distinction of tribes, and almost without knowing of themselves), should so exactly have conserved the Mosaic law, and other holy writings, but that they beheld the Land of Promise as their own, and had title to it, only by the Scriptures, which were their evidence?—I say, how is it imaginable they should neglect the care of preserving those records? Both prince and people were, to this end, among others, commanded universally to read and meditate on them day and night, abroad and at home; so as it was impossible they should forget them. They were often, indeed, reproved for their traditions, but never suspected of corrupting the Scriptures. And, as to the New Testament, many authentic copies, Tertullian assures us, were extant even in his time.

Thus have the Holy Writings been preserved, in spite of all the malice and purposes of wicked men, and even of the profanest potentates, who have had it in their power to suppress what they pleased. But neither the rage of tyrants (industriously set on it, as Julian and others), nor the flames of fire, nor long tract of time, could make any impression on the Scriptures, or extinguish their light, because it came from God. The world shall pass away, but the Word of God shall endure for ever;[1] though men and devils conspire to destroy it.

The Jews as to the New Testament, the heretics

[1] Luke, xxi., 33.

both to New and Old, have showed their calumny and spite. Herod, by his cruelty to murder the author; Satan, by his temptations; and the Roman Emperors, by their ten bloody persecutions to extirpate His disciples, so as books never met with greater contradictions; and that, because it came to destroy the kingdom of the prince of this world, and set up that of Christ. Thus we read that, in one single province in Egypt only, when Dioclesian would have burnt all their Bibles, seven thousand rather chose to die and suffer martyrdom than give them up.

It was by a no less signal providence that, to prepare the Gentiles for its reception, and as the coming of the Messiah, according to the prophecies drew near, it pleased God to stir up that learned prince Ptolemy Philadelphus, to have those glorious Oracles (till now peculiar to the Jews) translated into Greek, which was then the only learned and universal language; and that, by the persuasion of Demetrius Phalereus, to enrich that prince's famous library at Alexandria, whereof he was keeper.[1]

Another notable means of preserving the sacred text has been the *Masora*, or critique, so called, delivering the genuine writing and reading; a work of admirable use, as containing all the minutiæ of verses, sentences, points, accents, even to a single *iota*, to prevent

[1] The history of this work we have related by Eusebius (De Præp. Evang.), Philo, and Josephus; and the exceptions against the suspected part of it (as legendary) in Scaliger's Notes on Eusebius, and Bishop Usher on the Septuagint.

all addition or subtraction, so as to have numbered how many times the same letter occurs in the Old Testament. This traditional critique they hold to have been as ancient as Moses himself, and thence continued to the later prophets. But however this be suspected, it is likely it might be about the time of Esdras, or soon after; or rather near the Maccabees, about which time the sect of the Pharisees sprung up, and who have since filled the *Masora* with a world of trifles. As for the New Testament, besides innumerable editions and translations, that one Concordance of Buxtorf is worth all the Mazorites of the old. To this add *Keri* and *Kelib*, which are, likewise, criticisms about letters, consonants, and words, as what are to be read, written, passed over, and neither read nor written; famed also to be from Moses, though, in truth, not more ancient than Talmud. Besides these, there are the critiques of Ben Ascher and Ben Napthali. Moreover, the *Cabala* is of kin to the *Masora*, dividing the law into *Scriptam*, *Traditam*, and *Oralem*. There are also the *Mishna* and *Gemarah*, both of much more use than the *Cabala*, which deliver to us innumerable toys, fables, and many ridiculous and superstitious mysteries; yet all of them serving to preserve the Holy Text, at one time or other.

4. THE STYLE.

The style of the sacred pen-men, had they no other characters to entitle them to their Divine Author, were enough to show they could be dictated by no other than the spirit of God, because there is nothing of human in

it, and wholly different from all other compositions of men pretending to eloquence or sophistry,—things which recommend other writings. These, often forgetting what they mentioned before, or omitting something they forgot, are forced to recall, or add; which the Scriptures never do. The expressions are natural and simple, without flourish or studied elaborate periods, and flattering titles and invitations, to gain credit; but indited with that honest plainness that, if any other history should imitate, it would be rejected and despised by such as mind only to please the fancy and delight the ear.[1] And yet are there parts of it so sublime, and outshining the most celebrated profane authors, that no human eloquence approaches them.

There are in Scripture depths in which the elephant may swim, as well as the lamb may wade. Our Blessed Saviour speaks in an easy, familiar style; his similes and parables are natural, and incomparably pertinent, to the reproof of forced expressions and criticisms, for which ostentatious wits value themselves. And though not always according to the nicer rules of orators, yet is the Sacred style no less majestical. Who amongst them all has reached the rapturous attitudes of the prophet Isaiah? the first of St. John's Gospel, the Psalms of David, the Songs of Moses and Deborah, Job, Canticles, and several of the Sacred Hymns, which, however they may seem in the vulgar translation, are, in their originals, not only comparable to, but far transcending, the Heathen poesies. And, as

[1] See St. Aug., De C. Dei, l. 12.

to the loftiness of style, breathing of so divine and majestical, that Longinus, the sophist, himself is in admiration at that imperious word, *God said, Let there be light, and there was light!* [1]

The matter is not made tedious by formal argument, yet it is convincing and irresistible. Nor do the repetitions (as in other writings) leave a *nausea*, but still the same relish and veneration. What can move the affections more than the histories of Joseph, the story of Ruth, the sacrifice of Jephtha's daughter, the friendship between Jonathan and David? What more astonishing than the narration of the Levite's concubine being abused? What more passionate, and fuller set with rhetorical transitions, than the Lamentations of Jeremiah? What more moving and tender than the conduct of Mary Magdalene, the prayer of our departing Jesus, and the like?

As to variety of readings, transpositions, terms, synonyms, punctuations, they show an unaffected richness without studied art. And such a magazine are the Scriptures upon all topics and subjects,[2] as all the Platos, Ciceros, Senecas, historians, philosophers, and philologists, furnish nothing more plentiful, more useful, and that fall into juster and more shining periods, upon all occasions whatever;[3] adapted to convince, redargue, persuade, and instruct; not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in the demonstration of the Spirit, and in power;[4] not in choice phrases and

[1] Gen., i., 3.
[2] Matt., v., vi., vii.
[3] II. Tim., iii., 17.
[4] I. Cor., ii., 4.

elaborated methods, and structure of words, but with such light of conviction, depth of speculation, and, in the midst of all this plainness, such energy of operation, such sublimity of matter as nothing can resist it.

There is in Holy Scriptures such access to the weak and feeble, comfort to the sorrowful, strong meat for men, milk for babes; such elevation and grandeur of mind, advancing the humanity of men to the height of bliss; in a word, it is what manna was to the Israelites,—food delicious and accommodated to every man's taste. It is a deep well for depth, celestial for height. As it speaks of God, nothing is so sublime,—as of men, nothing so humble,—it is a bridle to restrain, a spur to incite, a sword to penetrate, salt to season, a lantern to our feet, and a light to our paths. Critique and grammar have too often prejudiced the meaning of the true and genuine text. Men dare not cavil the laws and ordinances of princes, if they are so clear as to be understood, whilst the laws of God are a thousand times more perspicuous. And, were it otherwise, men could not be religious, till they understood the learned tongues. But, since God has called all men to the knowledge of the truth, and, therefore, not many wise, not many learned, but the industriously humble, as well as the extraordinarily knowing.[1]

Had we heard the Apostles themselves preaching the Mysteries of Christ, should we have been in doubt

[1] Verba cœlestis oraculi non sunt restringenda ad regulas Donati; et melius est ut nos reprehendant grammatici, quàm ut non intelligant populi.—S. Augustine.

of their meaning, because haply there might occur some difficulty, or equivocal term, some syllable misplaced? Certainly, the words which they spake are the same they left us in writing, and sufficient to make us Christians, and order our conversation; and to promote the design of God, which was not to charm the world by the magic of words, but by the weight and honesty of the matter; and, accordingly, it succeeded beyond all the oratory and rhetoric of the Gentile schools, and cunning of sophists.

We do not all this while understand, by the style of Scripture, as if all the words and expressions were immediately dictated by an audible voice; I say *all*, without exception; for that the Decalogue, or Ten Commandments, was first written by the finger of God, and the Tables so inscribed delivered to Moses in the Mount, and afterwards, being broken, were by the same God renewed,[1] we make no question. And so were several laws and ordinances, by immediate dictate, as well in the New as Old Testament; namely, the notice of our Blessed Saviour's Incarnation, first to the Blessed Virgin, then to the Shepherds, to the Baptist, to the Apostles, to St. Paul, at his conversion, and at other times. But this was not always, and upon all occasions, as to the phraseology and style; but they all spake and writ as they were moved and inspired inwardly by the Holy Ghost, sometimes by visions, otherwhiles by dreams, *Urim* and *Thummim;* whether illustrating the component letters engraven on the pectoral,

[1] Exod., xx.; xxxi., 18. Deut., ix., 10; x., 4.

so as to make up the response,[1] or by a *teraphim*, inserted in the ephod offering a voice, is by the learned disputed.

Sufficient it is, that the matter was dictated, leaving the wording of it to the holy men, who received the impulse, not as a habit residing at all times in them, but upon especial occasions, as God saw fitting, and by immediate irradiation, as sometimes happened.

There were divers things delivered to the Prophets and Apostles, in images and symbols, in their several visions. And many things and actions they speak of as having done, which they did no otherwise than in prophetic vision and scenical imagery; such as Jeremiah's carrying the cup and the yokes to the several near and distant nations,[2] Ezekiel's besieging Jerusalem, lying above a year on his left side, preparing his food with dung, eating the bitter roll,[3] Hosea marrying a common harlot, rending of his hair, and the like.[4] These doubtless were not real transactions, but things impressed, and represented in their fancies only, and dramatically acted there, not before the people; for this would not only have been ridiculous to them, but unlawful.

These and the like were things of type only, though described by the Prophets as really acted; and were so set down in writing, and published as they themselves conceived them, so as men who dream might do. Though I do not say the Prophecies were only dreams,

[1] See chapter ix.
[2] Jer., xxv., 15; xxvii.
[3] Ezek., iv.; iii., 2.
[4] Hos., iii., 1.

but living visions—as the burning bush of Moses, the vision of Ezekiel, and the like, which made deeper impressions on the fancy. Such was the drama showed to St. John, through all the Book of Revelations. For we do not here enlarge on the ministry of angels to this purpose, frequent in the Scripture; nor more immediate inspiration, by which, haply, David and other holy persons, perceiving the usual temper of their minds extraordinarily transported, poured out those holy raptures, hymns, and sentences, as moved by the Holy Spirit; but with this difference from the Pagan oracles, that it was in a pacate way, not in a furious transport, and raving, such as possessed their priestesses, &c.: though sometimes, even in God's Prophets, with more extending zeal and fervour. For, as to the immediate voice of God,[1] it was more especially imparted to Moses, that great Prophet, so extraordinarily familiar with God,[2] because he was to be the basis and original of all the future prophecies; and doubtless he set down the very words he heard in the Mount.

As to the rest, they made use of their own style and abilities, as appears by their various writings and phraseology. Isaiah, a courtier, writes in a more sublime and lofty style than Amos, who was only a herdsman of Tekoa; and most evidently in the Books of the New Testament, particularly the Evangelist St. Luke, and the Epistles of St. Paul,—though both of them very learned men, yet the one writing purer Greek, the other

[1] This the Rabbins called *Gradus Mosaicus.*

[2] Numb., xii., 7, 8.

falling often into Hebraisms,—and so of the rest, less versed in the language. For it is not thought that the Apostles had at all times the gift of tongues; but at such periods, and on such occasions only, when it was needful for the conversion of strange and foreign nations and people; so that, according to their acquired parts and faculties, their style appeared; yet still in that wonderful manner, for its peculiar plainness, innocency, and, withal, a secret energy, as no writings could ever imitate to those divine effects.

The Holy Spirit dictated the matter, leaving the narrative to the Prophet: but at no time did He ever make use of idiots or fools to reveal His will to; but those whose intellectuals were entire, though sometimes rapt with a holy enthusiasm. Besides, we find both our Blessed Lord and Apostles not always citing the Scriptures verbatim, but varying and paraphrasing. This they would not have done, had the very *words* (as was the Pentateuch) been divinely dictated.

Lastly, when we find anything seemingly inconsistent, we are not to examine it by logical and artificial methods, and systems of human science; for all these are things below Divine Inspiration. And, therefore, Cicero doubts of the *sybilline acrostics*, arguing elaborate and affected diligence in the composition. So true is it that, *lumen propheticum est lumen abruptum;* and that other maxim of the Rabbins, *non est prius et posterius in lege;* many things of different kinds being contracted in the same vision, as St. Jerome has observed in the Eleventh of Daniel: for here we find a passing

over of divers inter-reigning princes between Cyrus and Alexander, and the like in Jeremiah, &c. Besides, it is notorious that the scribes of the Temple writ most of the prophetic sayings as the authors happened to prophesy daily; and thence comes it to pass, that chapters, sayings, &c., both in the Prophets, Proverbs, and Psalms, now treating of Christ, then of the captivity, now of one subject, then of another, seem so inconsistent, as not digested artificially, but as the Spirit gave occasion.

5. THEIR CONSENT AND HARMONY.

The consent and harmony of the Holy Scriptures,—how the parts cohere; so as the most seeming contradictions and passages are found to agree in sweet and mutual consent and union (the New Testament with the Old), indicates a wonderful Providence, in answering all the prophecies and expectations of it.

First, as to the consent of Versions, we are to note that, when the gift of tongues (necessary for the first planting of the church) ceased, then began they to translate the Scriptures into vulgar languages. So that Theodoret[1] affirms that in his time the holy books appeared in all languages, and so St. Jerome, who put it into his country's language, the Dalmatic; as St. Chrysostom, the Armenian; St. Augustine (some of it) into the Punic; Cyril or Methodius into the Sclavonic; into the Gothic Ulphilus; Bede into the Saxon; Michael Adamus into the German, which he writ in

[1] Lib. 5, de Concord. Græc. et Heb.

Hebrew characters, being a Jew; Jacobus de Veragine translated it into the Italian; Hieronymas Leopoldus into the Polonian; Charles the Fifth, King of France, into the French; Cassiodorus into Spanish; Wickliffe first into English. And by the piety of my noble friend Mr. Boyle, procured to be translated not only into Irish, but into the Indian also; and, through a late collection, through all this our nation, it has been endeavoured, and I think accomplished, in the Lithuanian tongue, Krinokrainsky being their commissioner to collect the charities in order to it.

And the tongues which now are called *learned* were indeed *vernacular*, when first the Scriptures were written in them; namely, both the Greek and Hebrew, as were also the offices of divine service. But that which introduces their enumeration here is their wonderful harmony and consent in all things that are necessary to faith and salvation; all the various lections and difficulties being *in minutioribus* only. And this it was morally impossible to avoid in so divers versions and languages; for so has the providence of God invigilated, that the Faith has suffered nothing; no, not from the malicious Jews. Thus much concerning the consent of translations, of which we shall speak more at the last Section of this Chapter.

We observe a most wonderful consent, also, in the types and figures of both Testaments, as that the first Adam was a figure of Christ; the second Adam, though to a contrary effect, of life by his death; assuming our flesh, to be Lord of all things in it, as the first Adam

had dominion over all creatures.[1] So Noah and the Deluge figure the church by baptism.[2] And, indeed, whatever else befel the patriarchs, prophets, and martyrs in the Old Testament were types of what Christians should suffer under the Gospel, as at large in the eleventh of Hebrews.[3] In like sort, their pilgrimages, the deliverance of the Israelites out of Egypt, difficulties in the wilderness, are figures of the afflictions and persecutions which the saints were to go through before they could come to heaven.[4]

In a word, it is considerable that whereas so many other writers of the same sect or profession, be it of human or divine matters, historians, lawyers, and philosophers, frequently differ even among themselves, these holy writers deliver the very same doctrine and history, without any discrepancy; and, whenever they but seem to do otherwise, the differences are not only small, but easily reconciled by other parts.

6. THE MATTER AND SUBJECT.

The matter and subject, or rather history of the Holy Scriptures, does certainly exceed all the writings and histories in the world. For as it begins, so as never history did, from the Creation, so it proceeds to show what shall be the end. First, as to the historical part; it tells us how the Almighty *fiat* created and

[1] Romans, v., 12-14. I. Cor., xv., 22, 45, &c.
[2] I. Peter, iii., 21.
[3] See Mr. Thorndike's Epilogue, book i., c. 5.
[4] I. Cor., x., 1, 11. Heb., iii., 19; iv., 11.

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educed, out of no pre-existent matter, a confused chaos; and out of that, this aspectable universe, with all its furniture. How man, being endued with an immortal soul, was placed in a garden, or country, of all natural delights and satisfactions; under an easy and reasonable prohibition, for probation of his gratitude and obedience to his Creator and Benefactor, lapsed from that blessed state, by his disobedience, and by hearkening to the temptations of an Accursed Spirit. And how, by the infinite pity of a gracious God, he had re-admission to favour and grace, by virtue of a second covenant; which, performed in this life (after a temporary dissolution and refinement), he should be reinstated in a happier condition than that which he lost, through the mediation of a Saviour; prescribing to him and his posterity, tainted and weakened by his fall, a new law of ordinance, which, being accepted, should make him happy.

Thus have we, in the old covenant, an account of the world before the Flood; how, for the sins of the world, a flood swept away the whole race of mankind, except one family, by whom the earth was re-peopled. Then follow the lives of the postdiluvian Patriarchs, and among them the effect of Abraham's faith, for which was revealed to him the promised Messiah. How his posterity was, in the mean time, to be grievously oppressed; with what signs and wonders to be delivered; how and by what ordinances to be governed under leaders, judges, and kings. How warned by Prophets; whom, disobeying, they were carried captives into Babylon, did seventy years' penance, and thence again

were delivered. And in what condition they continued till the fullness of the time, when Christ, the Lord and true Messiah, conceived and born of a pure Virgin, did, without sin, suffer for our sins in His body on the Cross; thereby paying our debt, and making our peace with His justly-incensed Father. We have there, also, full directions and instructions for the regulation of our lives, nay, of our very thoughts, as well as words and actions, qualifying us for eternal life and glory.

In these holy books, we also learn how this blessed and sacred person, God and Man, qualified to effect this stupendous work of our redemption, was ungratefully rejected, notwithstanding the holiness of His life, the purity of His doctrine, and the wonderful miracles He performed; and what befell those who crucified Him with that hellish spite. Not that God the Father was pleased with the sin of those who executed it, but with Him who, for our sakes, offered His interposition with that love and tender compassion; and for the repairing of His Father's glory by bringing many, through imputed righteousness, to eternal life, triumphing over death and hell.

This leads us, to the calling of the Gentiles out of their superstitious darkness, to embrace the Gospel; and teaches the Jews a more perfect and evangelical law, till now veiled under busy types and ceremonies, figures of the things to come. And this was through the preaching, first of our Saviour, then of His apostles, disciples, and evangelists, by the miraculous descent of the Holy Ghost; enabling them, by the gift of tongues

and miracles, to plant and propogate those mysteries among all nations; and which was to continue (namely, the doctrine which they taught) till the consummation and end of the world. These particulars, together with many prophecies and other events, through all these sacred books, show what they contain, and how necessary it is we should be acquainted with them, and assured of their truth. They show, as in a map, the condition of the Church, under all its dispensations; that there is a God, His attributes, such a thing as religion, and what this religion is, how different from all other worships.

In a word, the Scriptures contain the whole Will of God, as far as He is pleased to reveal Himself, which is as far as is necessary for our salvation. This is the history of the subject matter, teaching us the mystery of godliness—*mysteries*, indeed, and which the very angels desired to pry into, namely, the Incarnation of the Son, the Resurrection, the Ascension, the Trinity of Persons, the Hypostatical Union. How we are called and how sanctified, justified, and saved. Here we are directed in the way to the Sovereign Good, which those great and learned philosophers have striven to find, but in a way wholly repugnant to the means of ever finding it, without this direction. For where meet we with such holy and perfect precepts, just lives, and examples among the wise men, and disputers of the world? Such a faith as that of Abraham, faith against hope, in which all our happiness lies. Such miracles as our Blessed Saviour performed;—such mysteries as are contained in the Incarnation of Christ. In sum:—where, among

all the institutions and religions of the heathen, so holy a doctrine, consummate of all perfection, as the Christian, worthy of a great and intellectual nature, an immortal soul? That His followers should, in contemplation of things invisible, lose their fortunes and lives here, to live and be happy hereafter!—to overcome by suffering, and believe against appearance!—that abnegation, self-denial, repugning natural inclinations, humility, taking up the cross, suffering infamy and persecution with joy, loss of goods without murmuring, doing good for evil, forgiving injuries, forgiving and even dying for enemies, and for the faith, through exquisite and cruel torments, for an invisible good. Search all the laws, religions, morals, precepts, or examples of our greatest pretenders, and we shall find nothing, or very little, of all this, even among the most refined and sublime of their wise and famous men. They knew not such a thing as self-denial, purity of thought, or that speculative vices are abominable. Policy or vain-glory runs through all their writings. Here, on the other hand, the glory is totally attributed to God; and what was planted in persecution, and watered with their blood, grew up and prospered against all the malice of men and devils.

7. THE EFFECTS AND DESIGN.

In order to the end, what is more sublime and noble than the worship and adoration of the Glorious Creator? He rewards the creature with all the felicity a rational soul is capable of, namely, with the vision and fruition of that perfect Being, who at once consummates our

happiness to the utmost capacity of the soul. This is the design, and this the effect of the Holy Scriptures, their doctrine and precepts, ennobling and improving the superior man; enabling him to repel the temptations of seducing spirits. Our Blessed Lord did but say, *It is written*, and all the powers of Hell were not able to resist it.

Their design is, to teach us the duties required to render our worship of the Deity acceptable; that it be humble, substantial, significant, spiritual, decent without superstition, as recommending sanctity and inward purity, even to thought and imagination. It requires a righteous and worthy conversation; that the devout be adorned with all the divine and moral virtues (as far as is attainable and consistent with the unavoidable frailties of human nature), namely, justice, mercy, integrity, beneficence, gratitude, patience, love, temperance, fortitude, prudence, peace, and complacency: thus refining nature to a god-like temper, and preparing it for the life above, when it shall receive its full consummation. For the design and intention of the Holy Spirit of God (by whose effusion at Pentecost we continue Christians to this day) was not to gratify men's curiosity or secular designs, and therefore not dressed up in a rhetorical style, in exact and logical method, like other human sciences and philosophical notions; but to be the rule of our faith and practice, and to communicate to us what is necessary for our salvation, by sanctification and grace.

Other matters are only touched in general, and as they appear to common sense. And, therefore, Moses shows us the final causes of things, as proposed by God

to man, to incite and stir up his gratitude; not pretending to teach academical learning, or natural philosophy by physical causes, farther than may lead us to the admiration of the God of Nature.

Thus is the Scripture (as St. Chrysostom calls it) *Ostium ad Christum*,—the way, the truth, and the life. And we find more admirable and saveable matter in one only Sermon of Jesus upon the Mount, than in all the morals of the philosophers; so that Porphyry himself confesses that no sect of those famous men has been able to show how the great God was to be served and propitiated. In a word, the Scriptures are written for our learning, containing the whole counsel of God,[1] the whole duty of man; and, therefore, must nothing now be added to, nothing detracted from, them. Hence that of Tertullian,—*Adoro plenititudinem Scripturæ*. It is a *magazine* of all necessary truths, come we but with minds prepared. I say, they contain all necessary *credenda* and *facienda*,—all pertaining to faith or manners, either by express word and precept, or necessary consequences; and tending to good order, edification, and discipline. There is sufficient for all our wants, if we come with hearts to believe; but not enough to solve all our doubts, if we will dispute. It is the canon or rule by which to try just inquiries and controversies, not our impertinent and endless cavils.

Such powerful effects have the Scriptures, that (as we noted) they took root, not only in all places, but pierced the very hearts and souls of believers; and thousands lost their lives to save their Bibles, when the

[1] Acts, xx., 27.

traitors delivered them to be burnt. For what book, or history, in the world besides, would men be martyred, after all their idolizing of Homer, Virgil, Cicero, and the rest, that the learned doat on? That which no institution, or philosophic precept, among all their voluminous works, could effect in so many ages, was, by the doctrine and efficacy of Holy Scriptures, accomplished like a charm, in a moment, as it were; immediately operating, stilling the passions, mortifying our corruptions, debasing our pride, allaying envy and avarice, captivating our very thoughts and imaginations, and teaching us to live soberly, righteously, and godly, subduing our worldly lusts and pleasures. Thus was St. Augustine converted, by reading (as he tells us) but one period, but one single verse of Scripture:[1] so soon it finds its way to the most intimate recesses of the heart, beating down its strongest hold, and bringing into subjection every imagination to the empire of Christ.

St. Augustine was scandalized at the simplicity of the style of the Scriptures, before his eyes were opened, and then how did he change his mind! How deplore his blindness! How admire the Sacred Books! He calls the Scriptures *profunditas*, an inexhaustible storehouse; and therefore we are to search them, says another Father, by digging, as in a mine, for hidden treasure.[2]

Holy Scriptures being, then, thus designed, namely, that by the knowledge and practice of the doctrine and

[1] [See Romans, xiii., 13, 14. S. Aug. Confess., lib. viii., c. 29.]

[2] S. Chrysostom. Hom. 40.

rules contained in them, we may attain such happiness; every soul is obliged to search, read, and meditate them with all diligence, earnestly contending for the faith once delivered to the Saints. This was so strictly required, and enjoined so universally in the Old Testament, and so recommended to us in the New, that there can lie no reasonable prohibition to the contrary; whatever a certain Church of great name, out of secular respects, may pretend, and to keep men still in ignorance, lest they should discover, among other errors of it, this monstrous sacrilege; so as well might that [remark] of the learned Grotius be here applied, *Meritò suspecta merx est, quæ hâc lege obtruditur, nec inspici possit.*[1] But so tyrannically have they deterred men from this necessary duty, that we read of a poor Friar among them who thought himself damned for reading six lines only of St. John's Gospel, in the vulgar translation.

So benign has God been in enjoining us laws so reasonable, as, not contradicting the common notions of human nature (such as the heathens themselves celebrated), were such as are highly perfective of our well-being in this life, as well as that to come. For such are all the precepts of the Gospel rationally considered; nor, in saying this, do we level it only with natural religion, since, besides the things to be done (in which the false religion consisted), there are many things to be believed, as only revealed to Christians, besides the supernatural assistance which they wanted; above all,

[1] "Those wares which are thrust upon us, without the privilege of inspection, are justly held in suspicion."

the gift of the Lord Jesus, for example, and to expiate sin, and save our souls,—His working in us an internal principle of sanctity, if we reject it not.

Lastly, as to all other effects, it has communicated the most stupendous gifts,—converted the whole world, learned and pagan,—and subdued it without force of arms, money, or human policy, which shows it to be from none but Him, who is the Omnipotent.

Moreover, we have, besides all these, the confirmation of undeniable testimony.

8. TESTIMONY.

The things and actions recorded in Scripture were not done in a corner, but were visible and audible. That which we have heard, seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the word of life, we declare unto you.[1] The Scripture imposes not any miracles on the faith of those, among whom they were done, against common sense and reason (as those who would fetch *transubstantiation* out of it), though many of them above our finding out, as being spiritual, and not corporeal. But whatever was the object of sense (as all bodily substances are), visible, and palpable, were done before all the people; and that either by our Saviour Himself, or His Prophets or Apostles, persons well known, and in the face of the sun. They acted and preached publicly, in a well known part of the world, full of the most learned and inquisitive men, teaching also a doctrine threatening eternal damnation against all impostors, deceitful and lying

[1] I. John, i., 1.

miracles.[1] They always appealed to the senses, and to the Searcher of Hearts. Besides, the things reported to be done were the most liable to examination and detection, had they been false. Those of the Old Testament were done by Moses and several of the Prophets, in the face of the whole nation, and before kings and princes; nor has ever any historian since denied the matters of fact. And for the New Testament; as to John the Baptist's birth, his father and mother were of the most eminent persons among the Jews. Then, for his preaching, about the fifteenth year of Tiberius,—the Governors of Judea are named and punctually set down,[2] Annas and Caiaphas being High-priests; so the occasion of his beheading for Herodias' sake.[3] So the Nativity of Christ,—what can be more particular than what St. Luke has recorded?[4] When all the known world or Roman empire was in profound peace (as it was in the reign of Augustus), at the time of the universal census, and when Cyrenius was governor of Syria; he was born in a common inn of Bethlehem, the Blessed Virgin-Mother falling in travail, as she was on a journey; He was laid in a manger for want of another room. All these are particulars which were most easy to have been examined; and so his being baptized about the thirtieth year of his age, His preaching; the miracle at the marriage-feast in Cana of Galilee; His healing the Centurion's servant, a public officer in the army; ejecting the legion of evil spirits, and drowning so great a herd of swine; His raising

[1] Acts, iv., 14, 16; x., 39.
[2] Luke, iii., 1.
[3] Matt., xiv.
[4] Luke, ii., 17.

Jairus's daughter, and resuscitation of Lazarus before so many envious, as well as curious spectators. And, above all, that of His own trial, death, and suffering at Jerusalem, and in so notorious a time as the Passover, when the whole nation of the Jews was in the city; before so great a concourse of strangers, which used to come to that metropolis from all countries. To this add the rending of the veil, or partition-wall, of the Sanctuary, the splitting of the rocks, the graves of the dead opening, and the eye of Heaven, as it were, put out at noon-day, by a miraculous eclipse. Then, as to His Resurrection, there is the testimony not only of the pious women and disciples, but of the very guards of His sepulchre; His being seen by above five hundred at once, besides His appearing to St. Paul. All these particulars were so publicly notorious, and have been so exactly recorded, as never any history whatsoever, in any age, can produce like testimony; for the matter of fact is abundant enough to brave and put to silence all contradiction.

The like may be affirmed of the rest of the Acts of the Apostles: as how Herod, Pilate, pro-consuls and presidents, scribes and doctors, Pharisees and High-priests, Sanhedrim, all of them most malicious and bitter enemies to these proceedings, never once denying the facts; and which were set down in writing, whilst men's memories (who were spectators) were recent: for the Gospel of St. Matthew was written within seven years after; Mark, within eleven; St. Luke's, about twenty-nine years after Christ's Ascension; the Epistles of St. Paul and St. Peter, within thirty; and

all the rest within nearly the compass of sixty years; never yet convicted of forgery. And the entire volume of Scriptures has been generally received by all Christians, before any General Council, or convocation of Clergy, or Imperial edict, was so much as heard of. *So great is truth, and it will prevail.*

Thus is the credit of Holy Scriptures proved, by no less than ocular demonstration from matter of undeniable fact, and also its propagation,—marks so evident of its veracity, as, next to the contrivance of man's Redemption, nothing is more wonderful, nothing more stupendous.

Now, besides all these, as for self-evidence (if these be not sufficient), on pretence of such a light in Holy Scriptures, as should immediately operate on the soul, as natural objects act upon our senses (and at this distance of time since these things were performed), it is unreasonable to require it. And yet, though our intellectuals cannot discern the verity of things by immediate intuition, yet, by discourse, and evicting means, it may; namely, that power, by which men are enabled to draw perspicuous inferences from clear and plain principles. There are such evident ones in the Scriptures, as clearly infer that they ought to be believed and obeyed, though God has not been pleased to declare His mind concerning them in so many undeniable instances, as we see He has done, abundantly. But of this we shall say something in the summing-up of this chapter, speaking of the Interpretation of Scripture.

9. THEIR ANTIQUITY, AND THE SUFFRAGE OF HISTORIANS.

And, first, the Books of the Old Testament are, undoubtedly, of the most venerable and deep antiquity of any writings that we know or ever heard of; for, whether letters were invented before the Flood, we have no authentic records:[1] whereas, the books of Moses we find older than Orpheus, Linus, Musæus, or any, not only of the Pagan poets (who are esteemed the most ancient writers among them), but even of their very Gods—Jove, Janus, Bacchus, &c. This, without any great labour, may be proved to have been derived from the Mosaic writings; so that if, *quod antiquum est, verum est,* the Scriptures must needs be true, as well as ancient. Nay, so ancient, that even the very last writers of the Hebrew canon—Esdras, Haggai, Zachariah, and Malachi, lived and wrote (most of them) before the most ancient heathen authors.[2]

Besides, the Scriptures' indisputable precedency to all other writings, we find not questioned by any author whatsoever; whereas, we meet with so many eminent passages and persons mentioned by profane writers, as Japhet, Abraham, Moses, &c.; the Creation and Genesis of the world, the universal Cataclysm, the concurrent opinion of its future conflagration, the

[1] Joseph. Antiq.

[2] This testimony Appian gives, though an enemy of the Jews, speaking of Moses. So Justin, Juvenal, Pliny, Tacitus, Longinus, Porphyry, and Julian himself. Nor is it improbable but that, amongst other precious gifts, with which the Queen of Sheba was presented by King Solomon, those holy books, the fountain of all wisdom, were presented to her.

Tower of Babel, the dispersion, and the overthrow of Sennacherib.

Nay, and that they were written by Divine Revelation, too, and ever so esteemed, we have not only the testimony of all the grave and learned among the Christians of all ages, long before the Council of Laodicea, which first collected the canon; but the suffrage of both Jews and Gentiles, who lived about that time. Nor had any thing to the contrary been called in question, till the pride and itch of later critics have erected their impious creeds against some testimonies never before suspected, nor by them overthrown with so much as any show of sound reason. But, in spite of the malice and subtlety of the old and envious Serpent, those sacred records have, by a most signal Providence of the Almighty Author, triumphed over both men and devils, in the hands of those who lived so much nearer the times of their writing than Vaninus, Spinosa, Hobbs, and other audacious monsters, transported with the pride of showing their learning and ridiculous singularity, though at the price of the most evident and saving truths. But we leave these to their deserved doom.

As to that of the Evangelical History, the New Testament, Josephus (no Christian) goes parallel with it, mentioning all along the same persons and things, as of John the Baptist, Herod, Pilate, Gamaliel, Felix, and Festus; the succession of the high-priests, of St. James; yea, and gives a character of Christ himself, of which, I doubt not, Josephus must have heard; and could not reasonably omit, whatever doubt some have made of that illustrious passage.

To proceed, then, with the Heathen and human testi-

monies. Not as if we at all needed them, or built our faith thereon (having already produced such a cloud of witnesses), but to silence all gainsayers. We have from Suetonius, Tacitus, Pliny the nephew, that there was such a person as Christ, the Author of Christianity; and the history of their sufferings, who professed it in all ages after, to confirm it. We have, also, the testimony of Phlegon, about the miraculous eclipse, exactly agreeing with Scripture story, both as to the year, day, and very hour. So the time and place of our Blessed Saviour's nativity were extant in the Archives, even till St. Chrysostom's time, from the Census under Augustus, and agreeable with the public records, from Pilate's information. To this add the opinion of Tiberius concerning Christ, upon the information he had, of his miracles and person, out of Judea; for which he would have had him inscribed among the gods, had not a flattering Senate opposed it out of compliment to that emperor, for whom they would reserve that highest honour.

This history was so authentic, that Tertullian, who lived near that time, provokes all the world to contradict it, if they could: being a thing so public and upon record in his days. And Justin Martyr also appeals to the known acts of Pilate about this passage, requesting the emperor (to whom he dictates his *Apology*) to search their own records for what he so confidently affirms. The governors of all the Roman provinces being (it seems) obliged to keep exact diaries and registers, and to give the emperors account of all considerable passages happening under and during their ministry; and these, it appears, were extant in the time of this Apo-

logist. Nor has it been so much as once questioned as to the truth. Indeed, Porphyry, revolting from Christianity to Platonism, did all he could to disparage Scripture, but was so fully evicted by Lactantius, Eusebius, Apollinaris, and even in later days by Socinus himself, and that so incomparably (though in other weighty matters sorely erring), as never was victory against a Pagan more complete.

Moreover, as to the Old Testament, and the Creation out of chaos, &c.: Hesiod and divers of the ancients agree that it was requisite, that, for the perfecting of arts and useful inventions, men's lives should have been protracted at the beginning. The story of the Flood is very frequent under the disguises of Deucalion, Ogyges, &c. Nay, they have a tradition of it in the New World among the savages, which shows it was not a partial but total inundation. Alexander Polyhistor speaks expressly of the ark, from which, among all sorts of animals, a dove was sent forth, to examine the temper of the earth.

Who more commonly mentioned by writers than Japhet? The same author (as we noted) speaks of the Babylonish enormous building and division of tongues. Strabo mentions Sodom. The column of salt remained in Josephus's time, and haply does to this day. Eupolemus mentions Abraham as inventor of astronomy, and his migration into Phœnicia; as also his victory over the five kings, for the rescue of his nephew, with other particulars. And Polyhistor is so express, that there is hardly a passage in all Genesis unrecited. Many of these agree with Nicholas Damascene, Theodotus, Aristæus, especially that of holy Job; which (if any) haply might have been written even before Moses.

Manetho and Justin record the descent of the Israelites into Egypt as shepherds, the dividing of the sea, and the overthrow of Pharaoh; their abode in the desert, and their being nourished with a certain snow. The same is almost the entire story of Moses, though with some intermixtures of their own, especially in the book of *Artabanus* touching the Jews; where, also, is mention of the Egyptian plagues.[1] The same is mentioned by Demetrius and Eupolemus. And, though they pretend that Moses did all those wonders by his skill in magic, yet they record them, and have a tradition of his rod.[2] And as Origen hints, did thence use them in their conjurations, with the name of the God of Israel. Tacitus speaks of the Passover; Justin of the wars of Joshua, and the inscription of his beating out the old Canaanites, which some affirm was found not long since about old Tangier; as also of the building of the Temple, in which the fore-mentioned heathen have particularized many things, not forgetting the *basso-relievo* of the candlestick, and other vessels, as described in Leviticus, and which are still extant on the arch triumphal of Titus, at Rome; which I myself have seen, and caused an accurate draught to be then made upon the place.

In sum, we have in these authors the mention of the captivity, the history of Sennacherib, recited by Herodotus, the most ancient of all the heathen historians. In a word, so many are the testimonies of the truth of Scripture relations, as there do not appear the like in favour of any other history whatsoever. For, were the

[1] The Phœnician annals mention David and Solomon, and their leagues with Tyre.

[2] Confer. Cels., l. 4.

tradition of the Scriptures' antiquity and veracity not enough, that very reason, which leads us to the belief of any moral thing, were abundantly sufficient. Since, if we will only credit immediate demonstration, how should any know they were born from such parents, whose children they are reputed? Surely, such doubts would be very impertinent. We have for these sacred oracles as much assurance as of the work of any author, of which we make no question; and he who should not negociate into the Indies before he had seen them, must resolve never to see them. And what common interest can the world have so to deceive, and be deceived? Much less could the Mosaic law, least of all the Gospel, have found credit (the one imposing such an endless morosity of precepts to observe, and the other the Cross of Christ), had it not been originally manifest that such things were done to evidence that and this. By the same means that all records of learning are conveyed to us, are the Scriptures evidenced to be matter of historical faith; but, inasmuch as the matter of them had never been received but by the work of God, in that respect they become matter of supernatural faith, in regard of the reason, moving in the nature of an object to believe, as well in respect of God's grace, moving in the nature of an effective cause, unless we saw ourselves what was written; which were impossible to every individual man, that either has been or is to be born. What can be more a demonstration? And, therefore, we meet no adversaries, even the most captious and profane, who deny the authors transmitted to us. Besides, it is not any prejudice to our faith, as some fondly imagine, that one should, for all this, be-

lieve the Scriptures for reason, which tells us God cannot lie or deceive; for, if they tell us we *must* believe them, *because* they are the Word of God, they say more than that we must believe them for the strongest reason in the world. And those who pretend the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God,[1] are abused by the English translation, as if *natural* there imported only the rational, which, in truth, signifies *Animalis homo,* a carnal, sensual person, the most averse from *rational* that can possibly be; and such a man, indeed, receives not the things of the Spirit of God. Let men be first convinced by any means—call it reason or moral persuasion, immediate light, or whatever, that there is a God, and Holy Scriptures His Word, and they cannot but believe Him absolutely perfect, and so no longer dispute His will.

10. TRADITION.

Tradition is either divine or human; the first either dogmatical, touching faith and manners; or, secondly, historical, relating to the actions and lives of the patriarchs, prophets, Christ and His Apostles, and others empowered by them; thirdly, ritual, respecting ceremonies and forms of worship.

As touching dogmatical traditions. Till Moses's time, what was received, the Church had from God immediately; nor during the longevity of the patriarchs needed there any writing of things so fresh in memory, and which passed through so few hands. For Enoch, the third from Adam, might have delivered it to Noah, and Noah to Abraham; or if that be thought scanty,

[1] I. Cor., ii., 14.

Arphaxad, who lived before the death of Noah, above 400 years, died not till Abraham was eighty-six years of age. And then Moses, being born within 250 years of Abraham, and his grandchildren, especially Levi, the son of Jacob (who died in Egypt, A.M. 2385) and grandfather to Moses and Aaron, but 148 years distant, might very reasonably be thought to have received the worship and religion of the patriarchs from his father, without any need of writing or record. But when men's lives began to be exceedingly abbreviated, it pleased God that what they had then by tradition only, (as the seven precepts delivered to the sons of Noah, &c.) should be consigned to writing; especially when God also thought fit to add so many other laws and ordinances, prophecies, and the like, as He did from Moses to the coming of the Messiah; who, abrogating the ceremonial dispensation, introduced that of the Gospel, which was to continue to the end of the world, and be the *norma* and rule, by which the Church was to be governed and instructed to everlasting salvation. Not that, for all this, she does refuse the testimony of tradition, for the asserting the truth of the Scriptures being the same, which had been received from the penmen, under whose names they bear the titles; or by any other holy men collecting those materials, and inscribing the first authors' names, as is also usual in other writings. But she gratefully accepts it as God's great and signal Providence, to the exclusion of spurious writings, which the emissaries of Satan would have obtruded on the world, and made to pass for genuine and divine; receiving for doctrines divine the traditions of men, which our Blessed Lord bids us beware of.

In the mean time, when we speak of the *tradition* of the Church, it is not understood as if either that or the decrees of Councils, or expositions of Fathers, made them to be Scriptures, or had any faculty so to do, (as a late conventicle at Trent arrogates to the Pope) but we believe the Scriptures, from all the topics we have mentioned in this Chapter, and especially from their energy and effects upon the lives of men, by which they show themselves to be *αὐτοπίστοι*, and to be embraced *propter se*, by those who come prepared to receive them: of which anon.

Scriptures being then received as *Divine*, cannot wholly depend on the sentences of the Church as judges; since an authority sacred and solemnly declared is required in a judge; and this no judge can so much as pretend to, but from the Scripture. For we are to judge and know the Church by her faith and doctrine, not her faith and doctrine by the Church; which were to run the circle of that of Rome, pretending to prove her own authority by the Scriptures, and the Scriptures by her authority. Wherefore it is not, I say, the authority of the Church alone, which induces our assent; forasmuch as the Scriptures were the Word of God, before they were written, true and salutary, before they came to us, and precedent to the Church. Because the being of a church, supposing the profession of that religion the Scriptures teach, as sent from God, and the credit of those Sacred Writings necessary to the being of a church, necessarily proves them more ancient than the Church. So as, in order of reason, the Holy Scriptures (namely, the doctrine

contained in them) must be precedent to the Church, as Mr. Thorndike learnedly makes appear;[1] where he also clears that saying of St. Augustine against the Manichees. *Ego Evangelium non crederem, nisi me Ecclesiæ Catholicæ moveret auctoritas,* to be plainly not as meant of a church, as a corporation qualified to oblige its members, but of all Christians, persons of common sense, asserting the truth of Scriptures from such evidences as we have brought, namely, the consent of all people and nations; by that authority which miracles began, hope nourished, charity increased, succession of time has settled; conversion of Gentiles, predictions of prophets, and the like. All these constitute the Catholic Church and its unity, and are what the father intended by this famous sentence; and is as much as to say, that if there were any word in Scripture which could be brought to prove what the Manichees taught, he would suspend his belief of that Gospel, that should assert it. For if the reason, for which he once believed the Church, that the Scripture is true, should be supposed false, there could be no reason obliging us to believe it true. Indeed, in a case of doubt or doctrine, it were more discretion to consult the Church, and take the reason of it, from what the universal Church teaches, than from particular Christians, who cannot be presumed to understand it so well. And this is nothing to our present case: we are speaking here of what is sufficient to induce our belief, without the authority of the Church, which some so much insist on, as the only reason of our belief, having made

[1] Epilogue, Prin. of the Truth, &c.

it evident that her authority can be supported from no other than the truth of Scriptures, appearing so both to our reason and senses.

Now, the same reason which governs controversies in any point of religion ought to determine here. For the same Holy Ghost which effectually moves us to believe, supposes sufficient reason, moving in the nature of some object proposed to be believed. Therefore neither the truth of Christianity, nor Scripture itself, is admitted on the dictate of God's spirit, but presupposes the reasons convincing us that they are to be admitted. And, of consequence, the gift of the Holy Ghost, enabling the believer to continue in the profession and exercise of Christianity, supposes a belief of that religion which we sincerely profess; and by consequence the reason why we believe, which will not fail to infer the belief of Scripture.

To Infidels, therefore, such reasons are to be alleged as may first convince them, without pressing the truth, till it first appear to be true; and then whatever moves a man to be a Christian will force him to be a Christian.

Miracles, done by them from whom we receive the faith, are the only motive to show their Divine Author: and therefore we are obliged to believe and receive what they assert; yet not merely for the wonders, but the sanctity and excellency of the matter, justified by the light of nature, and harmony of both Testaments, justifying one another by the events. Now, that such miracles were performed, we have the concurrent testimony and tradition of the universal Church, taking here the Church for all believers. And though they

did or do not all behold them with their eyes, their ears may well supply that sense; and common sense shows that those things which all the world agree in are no less evident and certain (morally) than what we see with our quickest sense; especially when there can be no common interest to deceive, or be deceived. Upon this account it is, that men believe such places, cities, and countries really to be, which they perhaps never saw, but only heard of. And learned men are confident, upon the same reason, that there were such historians, orators, and poets, as go under the name of Herodotus, Livy, Xenophon, Demosthenes, Cicero, Homer, Virgil, &c. But as to those of Holy Scripture, there is yet a far stronger reason to believe they came from God alone, because the law and religion they teach and enjoin propose and exact such difficulties and contradictions to flesh and blood, by the moroseness of that of Moses, and sharpness of the Cross of Christ, as, had it not been originally manifest, and evidenced bright as the meridian sun, that such things were done as they relate, the world would never have embraced them. And since all cannot be eye-witnesses of what is passed, let it suffice that we have the suffrage of all who are gone before us, and which common reason makes to be as authentic evidence, as are our other senses. For, by the same means that all records of learning are transmitted to us, are the Scriptures proved to be matter of historical faith. And inasmuch as the subject of them had never been received but by the extraordinary work of God, in that regard, they become matter of supernatural faith.

The Church is no more in comparison of the Scrip-

ture, to the pretence of being the only cause of our belief, than was the Samaritaness in comparison of Christ, our Lord Himself. We believe not because of thy saying; for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.[1] The reasons for which our Blessed Saviour tells us Himself that we are to believe, are contained in the Scriptures. Lastly, as to the testimony of the Spirit, we can have no assurance even from that, but by our first believing, upon the reasons and inducements above alleged; seeing none can know that he has the spirit of God, without knowing he is a sincere Christian, and worshipper of God, which supposes the truth of Scripture.

These things were highly necessary to be premised, and cleared from all possible doubt, because nothing can be necessary to salvation, till it appear that the Scriptures are the truth of God, and to be our rule, by consequence of that which God has given us to judge and determine the truth of things by—namely, reason.

SECTION III.

1. OF THE BOOKS.

The Holy Writings, which, by way of eminence and for their high importance, we call *the Scriptures* and *the Bible*, are certain books containing two Testaments, the Old to the Jews, His peculiar people, and Church before the coming of the Messiah; and the New Testament left by our Lord Jesus Christ, the Messiah now come, and pertaining to both Jew and Gentile, proselyted to Christ's religion, and by which we have title

[1] John, iv., 42.

to salvation, and inheritance of the life everlasting. These Sacred Volumes, namely, the matter contained in them, delivered from God the Father, and His Son Jesus, by the Holy Ghost; first to the patriarchs, then to Moses and the prophets; after that, to the apostles, and from them to their successors down to the present age we live in, (as we shall make appear) contain the undoubted oracles of God, and the mysteries of our salvation. For after the voice of the Lord Jesus, who is the Bridegroom, Pastor, and Bishop of our souls, the Church, His Spouse, is to be heard; and She it is who has been the keeper and preserver of this celestial *depositum*, not as the Mother, but the Nurse; not the foundation, but the angular stone; not the fountain, but the stream, which has from hand to hand conveyed to us this precious and inestimable treasure.

The Holy Scriptures, delivered by Divine Revelation, Inspiration, Voices, Visions, &c., are either,

1. *Historical;* 2. *Legal,* or *Ritual;* 3. *Prophetical;*[1] 4. *Sapiential,* or *Doctrinal.*

As to the time they were first written and published, we have already proved them the most ancient, some before the Captivity, namely, from Moses to Zephaniah; some during the Captivity, as Ezekiel, Daniel, &c.; and some after, as Haggai, Zacharias, Malachi; of which more in this Chapter.

Those of the New Testament consist likewise of— 1. *History;* 2. *Doctrine;* and, 3. *Prophecy:* First, the Four Evangelists, with the Acts of the Apostles, who planted the Christian Faith immediately after the Descent of the Holy Ghost, enabling them by an ex-

[1] II. Pet., i., 19, 20, 21.

traordinary gift of tongues, and opening their minds, to understand the Scriptures, to publish it among all nations. 2. Then the *Epistles*, written by the Apostles to the Churches they had converted. 3. The *Apocalypse*, or Revelation of things recondite and of unknown event, importing prophecies of things to come. These being all the genuine and undoubted books of Holy Scripture, this last shuts up the Canon, and they are reckoned in this series:

SCRIPTURES.

OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.			OF THE NEW.	
Pentateuch, or Books of Moses. — Histor. — Ritual.	Genesis.	Sapiential. — Psalms.	4 Evangelists. — Matthew.	Epistles of the other Apostles. — James.
	Exodus.	Proverbs.	Mark.	I. Peter.
	Leviticus.	Ecclesiastes.	Luke.	II. Peter.
	Numbers.	Canticles.	John, written in a°. 97.	I. John.
	Deutero-nomy.	4. Major. — Isaiah.	Acts, by St. Luke	II. John.
		Jeremiah.	The Romans.	III. John.
		Lamenta-tions.	I. Corinthians.	Jude.
		Ezekiel.	II. Corinthians.	Apocalypse.[2]
Historical.	Joshua.	Daniel.	Galatians.	
	Judges.	Minor Prophets. — Hosea.	Ephesians.	
	Ruth.	Joel.	Philippians.	
	I. Samuel.	Amos.	Colossians.	
	II. Samuel.	Obadiah.	Epistles of St. Paul. — I. Thessalonians.	
	I. Kings.	Jonah.	II. Thessalonians.	
	II. Kings.	Micaiah.	I. Timothy.	
	I. Chronicles.	Nahum.	II. Timothy.	
	II. Chronicles.	Habakkuk.	Titus.	
	Ezra.	Zephaniah.	Philemon.	
	Nehemiah.	Haggai.	Hebrews.	
	Esther.	Zechariah.		
	Job.	Malachi.[1]		

[1] His Prophecy reaches to John the Baptist, and so unites both Testaments.

[2] Written (circ. A. D. 94) to the Churches of Asia. It seals the Canon. Rev. xxii., 18. "If one add or take from a rule, it ceases to be a rule." S. Chrysos. Hom. 12, in Phil. 3.

APOCRYPHAL BOOKS;

Not received as *Canonical* Scriptures, but containing, besides many excellent moral sentences and instructions, the history of what happened from the Captivity, and last of the Prophets (Anno Mundi 3589, to the year 3875), approaching the coming of the Messiah, Anno 4000. They are fourteen in number.

I. Esdras.	Baruch (with Jeremiah's Epistle to the Captives).
II. Esdras.	Song of the Three Children.
Tobit.	Susanna; Bel and the Dragon.
Judith.	Manasseh's Prayer in captivity.
Esther (a fragment).	I. Maccabees.
Wisdom.	II. Maccabees.
Ecclesiastes.	

Which yet the Church (as St. Jerome affirms) does allow to be read, for example and instruction; but neither proves nor pretends to establish any doctrine upon them.[1]

So that whatever books have been imposed since the Canon, as containing necessary doctrine, and saving truth, we are in nowise to receive them as such.

Now, the means to distinguish them is, amongst other marks, to trace the *tradition;* and if we find the doctrine delivered to have taken beginning any time since the Sacred Canon was fixed, we are to reject them as spurious. This well observed pares off innumerable superadditions from that Church, which has such an interest to advance her own traditions, not only as equal, but above the Holy Scriptures. *Ejus enim Pontificis auctoritas major est, quàm Scripturæ.*[2]

[1] Jerom. Proleg. in Lib. Solom: ad Cromat. et Heliod.

[2] Silvest. Dial-adver. Luth., &c. Gregory, vii., Dict. 16, Con. Roman.

On the contrary, when, in tracing a tradition, we discover no footsteps, when it was not used, we may presume it to be, though haply not *jure divino*, yet *jure Apostolico*. Such are the order of Bishops in the Christian Church, immediately succeeding the Apostles, *Infant baptism*, *Confirmation*, the more solemn Fasts, and Preparations before the anniversaries of our Lord's Passion, and the like. And those who hold the Scriptures clear in all things necessary to salvation, have no reason to exclude the tradition of the Church in these things.

We now, then, proceed to the Testimonies, which prove the Canonical Scriptures only to have been in all ages of the Church the same which we at this day receive, and for such acknowledge them. And for this we need go no farther than to that excellent history of the late Bishop of Durham,[1] my intimate acquaintance, compiled when, by his Majesty King Charles the First's command, he officiated in my father-in-law's[2] chapel at Paris, during that horrid rebellion which banished his present Majesty and many of his loyal subjects out of England; endeavouring to destroy the Church thereof, and consequently the most primitive under the cope of Heaven. But God Almighty, who first reformed this Church, and so signally restored it, will, I trust, still maintain and preserve it to the end of the world.

It is from this Treatise that we shall assert this Article; and first show why the Books of Holy Scrip-

[1] Dr. Cosin's "Scholastical History of the Canon of Holy Scripture."

[2] Sir Richard Browne, Resident for his Majesty there, from 1641 to 1660.

ture are called *Canonical*. They are named *Canonical*, as being the *rule* by which we are to *square* all our actions, and are, therefore, by the Fathers, called *Stateram Trutinam*, by which we are to weigh, as well as square, measure, and examine our faith and belief.

Now, although the Jews counted no more in their Canon than do the Reformed Churches at present, yet they ranged them not into so many classes; for they made three only. In the first of these was only the *Pentateuch:* 2. All the Prophets: 3. Sacred Writers, as they called them, distinguished from the Prophets, for that they had not the mission of Prophets, though inspired by the same spirit of truth. Of the first rank, were Moses' five Books; of the second, four of the first Prophets, and four of the latter; and then, thirdly, the *Hagiographi*, nine; making up in all twenty-two, according to the number of the Hebrew Letters; as being all of them written in that tongue (then vulgar), except Daniel and Ezra, in the Chaldean, which they best understood. But in this recension *Ruth* is but an appendix to *Judges*, as *Lamentations* are to Jeremiah. Nor are *Samuel* and *Kings* accounted more than two Books. Then, the twelve minor Prophets, but as one Book, and thence called the Book of the Prophets.[1] And so, both the *Chronicles* were reckoned but as one, as also *Ezra* and *Nehemiah*. The reason why they set the Book of Chronicles in the last place was, for their containing, as it were, an epitome of all former passages, from Adam to their reduction from captivity, and so closed up the entire Bible.

All these Books are generally thought to have been

[1] Acts, vii., 42. Conf. Amos, v., 25, 26.

thus digested, examined, and revised, by Ezra, the priest, after their return from Babylon, and so delivered to posterity. Nor did our Blessed Saviour speak of any other Scriptures but Moses and the Prophets, no more than did His Apostles after him.[1] Thus the same number of Books and Authors stood the first century; and, in the second, as appears by the Apostolical Constitutions and Canons, where they have not been interpolated; also, by Dionysius, the Areopagite, Mellito, anno 160, Justin Martyr; in the third century, as witness Origen, Julius Africanus, Tertullian, St. Cyprian; in the fourth, Eusebius, the first General Council of Nice, St. Athanasius, St. Hilarius, St. Cyril, the Council of Laodicea, St. Epiphanius, St. Basil, St. Gregory Nazianzen, St. Chrysostom, and, above all of this century, St. Jerome, Ruffinus. In the fifth century, by the great St. Augustine, Innocent the First, the Councils of Carthage and Chalcedon; in the sixth, Cassiodorus, Primasius, Anastasius, Leontius, Victorinus; in the seventh, St. Gregory the Great, Isidore, the sixth Council of Constantinople in Trulla. In the eighth century, Damascenus, the venerable Bede; in the ninth, Alcuinus, Nicephorus, Strabus, &c.; in the tenth and eleventh, Radulphus Flaviacensis, Hermanus, Giselbertus. In the twelfth century, Zonaras, Rupertus, Honorius, Hugo de Sanct. Victore, Philip Salitarius, Gratianus, Petrus Comestor, Johannes Salisburiensis, Balsamer. In the thirteenth century, Hugo Cardinalis, Thomas Aquinas, and the Schoolmen, the

[1] Luke, xxiv., 27, 44, 45; Acts, xxvi., 22—xxiv., 14—xxviii., 23; Hebr., i., 1; II. Tim., iii. 16.

Glossers on the Bible; in the fourteenth, Nicephorus Callistus, Johannes Columna, Brito, Nicholas Lira. In the fifteenth century, Thomas Anglicus, Thomas Waldensis, Paulus Burgensis, Alphonso Tolatas, Dionysius Carthusianus. In the fourteenth and last, being just before the present century, Francis Ximenes, J. Picus Mirandula, Jacob Faber Stapalensis, Ludovicus Vives, Erasmus, Cajetanus, the famous Translators of all the Bibles hitherto; all these being either Greek or Latin Fathers, Martyrs, Confessors, Bishops, Divines, and the most renowned persons for sanctity and learning of both Eastern and Western Churches, men of undoubted credit.

The whole stream of the Catholic Church thus hands down to us the Canon of the Sacred Scriptures, with one voice, from all the famous countries and churches in the Christian world, till, by a new (and never till then heard of) Decree of a packed Assembly at Trent,[1] against all the above-mentioned authorities, are adopted the Apocryphal Books into the Canon, damning all people who receive them not *pari auctoritate* with the undoubted Oracles of God. And that only and visibly to support certain corrupt dogmas and dangerous errors in religion, for the advantage of the Court of Rome, and the tyranny, pride, and covetousness of an interested party, as may at large be seen in the author[2] of the history of that pretended Council, contrary to the suffrages of the most learned and religious amongst them, and of all the Princes and other Potentates who sent their ambassadors. The Protestants, however, who came, and such as came with any intention to reform

[1] Sess., iv. [2] Sleiden.

errors and abuses, were not admitted, which would have made it a free and Æcumenical Council.

Thus, to gratify the Roman Pontiff against the universal testimony of Scripture, Councils, Fathers, Schoolmen, Doctors, and learned Divines, of all former and subsequent ages, do they advance their new and unwritten traditions, as sacred and canonical, and to be received with the same filial affection and reverence.

The reverend Council, who stamped their Canon to represent the whole Christian Church, was composed of about forty Bishops, of whom many were only titular and pensioners to his Holiness, and some without any learning. Of the Greek Church, they had not one Bishop, but one from England, none from Germany, Helvetian, or Northern countries; two from France and Spain.[1]

Behold the goodly Æcumenical Council, which durst equal those Books with the all-sacred and venerable Scriptures—books which had been rejected and excluded by such a cloud of witnesses as we have produced. And that to establish doctrines totally repugnant to the Christian truth, delivered by our Blessed Lord, as

[1] Thus writes the ingenuous historian, who himself was present. Audax inceptum videbatur, quinque Cardinales et quadraginta et octo Episcopos auctoritatem Canonicam libris anteà incertis et apocryphis dare. In his tamen præsulibus non temerè reperiri aliquem præcellentis doctrinæ, laude insignum; Leguleios esse aliquot, in juris professione fortè doctos, sed religionis non admodùm intelligentes, paucos Theologos, eosque eruditione intra vulgus Theologorum, plerosque Aulicos; ex iis aliquos titulares tantùm, et Episcopos magnam partem Civitatum adeò minutarum, ut si quisque Clerum et populum, cui præsit, referat, vix omnes millesimam orbis Christiani partem repræsentent. Hist. Con. Trent., lib. ii.

we shall come at large to show in the eleventh chapter of this Treatise. But this is that Church which has presumed to make new Articles of Faith, and to anathematize and curse all those who receive them not for Gospel, thereby condemning, with unheard-of insolence, all those ages, Fathers, and Writers, who have faithfully adhered to primitive truth.

In the mean time, as to the Apocryphal Books,—though we acknowledge them useful, both for the historical and instructive part (as are many other excellent books not divine), yet were they never admitted for authentic Scripture; nor were they written in the Holy tongue, no, nor so much as translated by the Septuagint; but they were first written by the Hellenist dispersed Jews in Persia and Egypt, never owned by the ancient Hebrews, or once cited by our Blessed Saviour or the Apostles; nor were they used of old to be read in churches, and, when permitted, with the caution, not as to establish any new doctrine or faith upon them; nor were they read by the Bishop there, but by some inferior minister, in a lower part of the Assembly.[1] For there had been, from time to time, divers vagrant pieces (to which we do by no means compare the Apocrypha, which, after those of the undoubted Canon, we esteem preciously), endeavoured to be vended and imposed upon the world for authentic and divine.

[1] Non tutò cuivis est credendum libro,
Qui venerandum nomen S. Scripturæ præferat,
or,
Qui Biblici prænomen augustum ferat.
Amphiloc. Ep. ad Seleucum.

Plato tells us of certain *agyrtæ* and impostors of his time, who went about with such ware under the names of Musæus and Orpheus;[1] that under such splendid and famous titles they might allure men to buy their books. The argument of these were divers forms of expiations for the most prodigious and horrid impieties; at the bare recital of which conjurations they were absolved.[2] About P. Gelasius's time there was a world of supposititious writings vended and received by the heretics. How long has that spurious Hermes Trismegistus cheated the people? Pastor, Dionysius the Areopagite, Epistle of St. Bernard, Enoch's prophecies, &c.? Liturgies ascribed to the Apostles, Sybilline Oracles, Christ's Letter to Agbarus, the Gospel of St. James, and that of Nicodemus, &c., most of which are very happily now lost. Indeed, divers of the Fathers did often cite these Apocryphal books under a venerable name, as also they sometimes did the Fourth of Esdras, the prophecy of Enoch, &c., under the title of Scripture, as in a large and popular sense, but not as canonical and divine, but only to distinguish them from mere profane and common.

In sum, it is enough to determine this, that there is neither Bible, manuscript or printed, which has any catalogue set before it, to decree what books were canonical; but the known and universally-received Prologue of St. Jerome, distinguishing the canon from the Apocryphal, both particularly and exactly, as all the ages, since his time to this, agree, that of the Synod of Trent excepted, which is of no validity. To this add

[1] Σελήνης καὶ Μουσῶν ἐκγόνιον.

[2] For these see Dr. Wake.

the testimony of Josephus,[1] as cited by Eusebius,[2] above all we have named. As to those Books of the New Testament, which some critical persons made some scruple about, as *St. Paul to the Hebrews, St. James's Epistle, the Second Epistle of Peter, the Second and Third of St. John, Jude, and the Revelation of St. John,* attributed to Cerinthus, the heretic; it can never be made out that they were rejected by any entire Church, Council, or sober author: but of this anon.

Some of the Sapiential books, and others, not received into the canon, were (as we have showed) permitted to be read to the people for instruction and encouragement, for their many wise sentences and moral lessons contained in them; and for the examples of constancy of some excellent persons; and because they continue the thread of Sacred History of the Old to the near approach of the New Testament; but were still accounted Apocryphal and out of the list.

Indeed, St. Paul, writing to the Romans, and Corinthians at Athens, cites Aratus, the poet Menander, a comedian, and Epimenides, or, as some will have it, Callimachus; and so also *Jannes* and *Jambres* are names not found in the canon, but likely out of some Talmud or record. So St. Jude[3] mentions a passage from Enoch not extant. But then the things are both certainly true, and such as give greater light to the subject treated on. And to such *Apocrypha* we have still great veneration. But that any thing suspicious could be foisted, or creep, into the Holy Text, seems morally impossible; so many, that is to say, no less

[1] Joseph. cont. Apion., l. 1. [2] Eccles. Hist., l. 3, c. 9.

[3] Jude, 14.

than twelve copies being delivered to every tribe, and so many again by them to every particular Synagogue; while the originals were kept in the ark with all imaginable care;[1] as they were afterwards by the Christian Church, and translated into so many languages. And this by persons of different countries and religions too, yet all agreeing in most material points. For, as to the various lections, they are not at all considerable, in prejudice to any point of doctrine or history; and, therefore, we do not condemn the study of good letters, tongues, and other helps of human learning, but embrace and encourage them. The small differences occasioned by their criticisms are no way capable of shaking the foundation of the faith contained in them; not to pass over that where there are really any difficulties, they are still useful to humble us, and defend us from the superstition of the simple letter, and doating upon terms.

It has been said by some,[2] that the Pentateuch were but collections of certain ancient Jews, rather prescribed by Moses than compiled by him. And, as to the Book of Job, that it was written by Moses, or (as some think) before him, and is, therefore, the most ancient of books; that though the ground of the history be true, yet that the dialogue with his friends is amplified and adorned, to make the narration the more useful and agreeable; nothing of which invalidates any thing of their being divine.

[1] These were dispersed through all the world when the Jews were scattered, so as they could never come together to forge or contrive any thing to corrupt the sacred books.

[2] Spinosa, &c.

Now, whether the Epistle to the Hebrews was written by St. Paul, Luke, Barnabas, or Clement, is as little material, since we find him to have taken out several passages, word for word, from his Divine Epistles; and, as to the rest of the chapters, the accurate examination of so many learned, great, and holy persons, acknowledging them for genuine; we have, in particular, the suffrages of Justin Martyr and Irenæus, Ignatius and Polycarp—men who lived so near the time of the Apostles, as to have some of them conversed themselves with them. Nor were they yet admitted into the Sacred Canon without the utmost caution, accurate sifting, and examination. That they were at all questioned proceeded from their being directed and addressed to particular Churches, and not to all; which subjected them to the proof, and that, doubtless, by producing the originals themselves (for many such there were in Tertullian's time), to the entire satisfaction of the Churches; as that of St. Mark's Gospel is affirmed to be yet extant at Venice. And since we have mentioned this Evangelist, it is noted that the last chapter of that Gospel was found but in some few copies, and, therefore, indeed, rejected by some, but for no approved reason. That St. John writ his is thought to be, for that the other three had related the history of but one year only of our Blessed Saviour's life, namely, from St. John the Baptist's imprisonment to our Lord's death.

Esther was left out of the Jewish canon, as some affirm; and, indeed, the six last chapters are not in the Hebrew, but seem to have been added by some Hellenistic Jews.

Now, as to the objection that there was not always

an universal assent as to these and other books more lately received into the canon, it lasted but a little while, namely, till things and circumstances (as we said) could be duly examined, and nothing imposed and obtruded on the world but what was genuine and authentic; it being soon found that the books we now own for such were owned and received by the Church; and that such as were at all questioned retained nothing which concerned the faith, or any morals dissonant from those books, which never were called in question. And for those which were as above mentioned,[1] supposing (but not granted) them not to have been so immediately dictated by the Holy Ghost, the Christian Doctrine was able to defend itself without them. The controversy relates not to their antiquity and truth, but to the writers; all of them being acknowledged to have been penned by Apostolic men in the Apostolic age.

Daniel of the Old Testament was, it seems, one of the last received by the Jews, for fear (it is believed) of provoking those tyrannical princes whom these prophecies concerned; and the like is conceived of *St. John's Revelations*, who was the last of the Christian Prophets. Not that it did yet utterly expire in him, since we find the gift unto Justin Martyr's time, who lived 150 years after Christ; but, however it might be given to any, it was not so as to add any thing to the Scripture, though many admirable virtues of the Holy Spirit did manifest themselves by them. The like may, haply, be safely affirmed of that *Second Epistle of St. Clement to the Corinthians*, breathing of an Apostolic spirit; the first especially, as thought to have been written before the canon was fixed,

[1] See Pole's Synopsis Crit. in Apocal. Vol. ult., 1659, &c.

and has, after a thousand years that it lay hidden, been pronounced truly authentic. We have a no less ancient copy of it in His Majesty's St. Hecla's Bible at St. James's. To this might I add *the Epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians*, and those seven of *St. Ignatius*, published by the learned Isaac Vossius from a Florentine manuscript, as our late Bishop Usher had done before.

To return, then, to the Old Testament. It is certain that the later Prophets ceased in *Malachi*, about the reign of King Darius, to the end that they might expect that New Dispensation of the Messiah now approaching, and prophecied of by Joel.[1] Of this St. Peter makes use, to take off the admiration of the Jews, when, on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Ghost was so plentifully effused. Whence St. John the Evangelist[2] calls it the Testimony of Jesus; and St. Paul, his imparting gifts of men.[3]

2. COPIES.

We shall now say something concerning the *Copies* of the Sacred Oracles, and what more we find doubted of and rejected by the Church. Such were those we to this day esteem *Apocrypha*. For, though St. Jerome says he had seen *Ecclesiasticus*, *Tobit*, and the *First of Maccabees* in the holy tongue, yet he brings them not into the canon, no more than *Wisdom*, *Baruch*, the additions to *Esther* and *Daniel*, which that learned Father would not meddle withal.

That the Book of *Wisdom*, attributed to Solomon, was composed by some Hellenistic Jew (probably Philo), in imitation of that wise king, is universally conjectured. Indeed, *Ecclesiasticus* is cited by Josephus *against* Appion,

[1] Joel, ii., 28. [2] Rev., xix., 10. [3] Ephes., iv., 8.

as if it had been canonical; but it is plain that it has been since added to Josephus's text, and is not to be found in the ancient version of Ruffinus.

St. Jerome utterly rejects *Baruch* in his Preface to *Jeremiah*, as also *Tobit*, *Judith*; and the Books of the *Maccabees* are, by Eusebius, put in the rank of Josephus and Africanus. And, therefore, we are not to account them *Divine*; for that we sometimes (as was noted) find the Fathers, now and then, in their writings under a divine epithet, since it is evident Origen, St. Jerome, and St. Hilary, who cite them, enlist them among the *Apocrypha*, and, as Pope Gregory[1] acknowledges, were published only for the edification of the Church.

It is, indeed, pretended that the *Maccabees*, and some other of those books, were adopted into the canon by the Council of Carthage, about four hundred years after Christ; but this is a false report, nor had they any such character till the Council of Trent; and it is enough to read the two last verses of the second of *Maccabees* quite to uncanonize them.

There is a Latin version of St. Barnaby's Epistles, and a good part of the Greek original, believed to be his, as making use of the same passages which Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, Eusebius, and St. Jerome cite; but we find it full of fables and allegories, not at all becoming the Apostolic spirit. The Liturgies of the Apostles are likewise rejected; and, indeed, those symbols and creeds, which pass under their names, although containing the most solid and material articles and rules of our faith, are only believed to have been composed by the Apostles; Ruffinus being the very first of the

[1] Gregor., l. 12, Moral.

fifth century who affirms it, yet but as a popular tradition. Of the same credit (for author) are their canons and constitutions, as appears by the mention of temples, catechumens, festival days, and some absurd and fabulous things; as the permitting female slaves to be corrupted by their masters, with the like.[1] For the Constitutions are but of the third age, and have, from time to time, been much changed, augmented, and corrupted.

But besides the Creeds attributed to the Apostles, three more, namely, that of *Aquileia*, the *Oriental*, and the *Roman* considerable differ; the Articles of Catholic Church, Communion of Saints, and Eternal Life, being left out and wanting.

Lastly, the Acts of the passion of *St. Andrew* are of the same credit, and also the Books of the Sybils; it being neither agreed on what their names or numbers were. Those which the Fathers have cited were thought only what some Christians have invented; those good men not so critically sifting out matters as other learned persons since have done, but taking much on trust. Accordingly, they cited, now and then, Hystaspes, Trismegistus, and others of great name in those early times; for it was hard to find when their prophecies were written; nor indeed, made they much noise before Antoninus's time.

I shall say nothing as to that passage in Josephus[2] concerning our Blessed Saviour, it being yet thought a pious fraud inserted.

Of the Book of the Pastor, called *Hermas*, a disciple of the Apostles, we have already spoken, and it was received by divers churches, and is cited both by Irenæus,

[1] L. 3, c. 1, and l. 8, c. 32. [2] Antiq., l. 18., c. 4.

Origen, &c.; but, it being so full of visions, it has lost its credit. Let us, then, hear St. Augustine:[1] "So dangerous is it in matters of religion hastily to believe every pretended spirit, and greedily to swallow whatever has the show of piety, without considering whether it be truth." Let those, then, who embrace the Council of Trent's decree, take heed lest they fall into this specious snare.

Wherefore, as to these books we have mentioned, and others of that rank, if they be not written by the dictate of the Holy Spirit, let us with Tertullian[2] fear the woe denounced to such as shall offer to add to or detract from the Sacred Word, which St. Athanasius[3] assures us are self-sufficient. Believe, says he, what is written; what is not, seek not. It is a manifest apostacy from the faith, and an argument of arrogancy, either to reject any of those things which are, or introduce such as are not written: *Ut discatis in verbis, supra id quod scriptum est, non sapere.*[4]

In the mean time, we derogate nothing from any of those excellent Writings, recommended to be read to the *Catechumens* of old, both wisely and piously, as books which set forth (besides the historical part) the resurrection and happy state of the righteous after this life.[5] And there are worthy lessons in the Books of

[1] Non fit religio nostra in phantasmatibus nostris; melius est enim qualecunque verum, quàm omne quicquid pro arbitrio fingi potest; melior est vera stipula, quàm lux inani cogitatione pro suspicantis voluntate formata.—De Ver. Rel., c. 55.

[2] Tertull. contr. Hermog., c. 22.

[3] Orat. ad Gent. De verâ ac piâ fide.

[4] Basil. Hom., 9; Deut., iv., 12; Gal., 1, 8.

[5] See II. Macc., ii., 7; Esdras, iv., 41, 42.

Wisdom, *Ecclesiasticus*, and others, recommending the law of God to the Gentiles, and showing Atheists and persecutors of the saints that there is a state after death. So the *Song of the Three Children*, &c. All preparatory to usher in the Gospel, which more plainly taught those things, and refined the law.

The Jews (as we have noted) were by St. Augustine acknowledged the keepers of the Sacred *Depositum*,[1] and that, certainly, with all imaginable care; not only before, but all along during, their captivity; at what time they settled in a deep resolution to detest all idols, and to teach and observe the law with all sincerity for the future.

There is a copy of *Genesis* in Sir Robert Cotton's library, thought to be of very great antiquity.[2]

The Gospel of St. Matthew, and the Epistle to the Hebrews, were believed to be written in Hebrew for the Jews of the Circumcision; but it rather appears to have been in the Hierosolymitan Chaldee, as in the Targum, and only penned with the Hebrew character.

3. EDITIONS.

The first editions of the Books of Scripture after Moses were doubtless that of Esdras, whom the Jews called *the second Moses*,[3] and of the great Sanhedrim, after their return from Babylon. They collected the several books from several places, and reduced them into one entire volume, correcting what was amiss, and constituting the Canon of the Old Testament; and all by Divine authority, there being then amongst them

[1] Capsarios Ecclesiæ.

[2] [Since deposited in the British Museum.] [3] Alterum Mosem.

divers of the prophets surviving, as Haggai, Zacharias, Malachi, and, as some believe, Daniel himself.

This book had, besides, sundry other editions, after Christ's Ascension, as well by Jews as Christians. Of these the more celebrated was *the Tiberius Masoreth*, who added the points for the more easily reading the text, about A.D. 500. Since that, it has all been examined by divers famous Rabbins from several copies, though, indeed, we have few so ancient as the Greek, because, after the Masoreth critics and punctuation, the Jews esteemed no books that were not conformed to theirs; so that all others were neglected.

4. TRANSLATIONS.

Now, when the Gift of Tongues ceased, necessary for the first founding of the Church, holy and learned men began to translate the Scriptures into the vulgar languages, never intending to conceal their sacred knowledge from the people.

The very first and most famous was that of the *Seventy*, called the Septuagint. This it was, that almost all that followed, took for their original, as used not only by the most ancient Fathers, but by our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and the Apostles; albeit sometimes seeming to be different from the Hebrew text, as Irenæus proves.[1] The story of this renowned version is related by Aristæus, a Jew, and favourite of the Prince's. That Ptolemy[2] Philadelphus, sending a solemn

[1] Iren., l. 3, c. 25.

[2] [B. C., 284. The richest prince of his age. During his reign, Alexandria was the asylum of learned men,—he greatly augmented the famous library there, which was afterwards destroyed by fire.]

embassy to Eleazar, the high priest, son of Onias, brother to Simon the Just, desired the high priest to send him a copy of the Holy Books, which he did, with seventy-two learned doctors, six of every tribe, skilful in both tongues, Hebrew and Greek. These, having a quiet place assigned them in a certain island near the city, finished the whole translation in seventy days, and, bringing their works to be compared, (for they all had their several cells apart) found a punctual agreement throughout, without the least difference, to a tittle. For which they were not only royally rewarded, and sent back with rich presents to the high priest, but had granted them the freedom of a hundred thousand Jewish slaves.

But this celebrated translation is thought to have been lost in the wars of Julius Cæsar, when that glorious library was burnt, and in it seven hundred thousand volumes. Some yet affirm that the copy escaped the flames, and was to be seen at Serapio, in the time of St. Chrysostom. And, indeed, it is that Father who has named it the forerunner of Christ, to prepare for the reception of the Gospel by the Gentiles,—which was before a sealed fountain. And so envious grew the Jews afterwards, and so enraged at it, that the Heathen should be thereby brought into the Church, that they instituted a fast annually, to deplore the occasion of it. For this having been published 277 years before our Blessed Saviour's Incarnation, was, by the especial Providence of the Almighty, a preparatory to their more ready conversion; the Greek tongue being at that time almost the universal language.

The particulars of this story, though strongly con-

tested, is yet affirmed by Josephus, Philo, Tertullian, Cyprian, Eusebius, and St. Jerome, who lived much nearer those times than any who have since questioned it. Indeed, as to their translating a part in so many several cells, it is not very likely, since they must there have been furnished with as many several copies; whereas, we read of not above one which they brought with them, in great ceremony, from Jerusalem. Besides, the diversity of style shows no small discordance, and makes it rather probable that every one took his portion; and so, they might easily finish it within the time. And yet, though it differ in some words, it does not in sense. It is likewise questioned by some, whether they translated more than the Pentateuch, other Hellenistic Jews doing the rest. But neither of these is at all material, there being indeed many Jews about this time in Egypt and Alexandria, who enjoyed great privileges under the first Ptolemy, a lover of learning, whilst they neglected their own language for their affection to the Greek.

In the mean time, we do not insist upon Aristæus's credit for every circumstance of the story,[1] whilst the version is of that universal credit, as never to have been called in question, till the new Council of Trent damned it, and all other but their Vulgate, contrary to the suffrages of the most learned men even among themselves.

Indeed, as to antiquity, the *Samaritan Pentateuch* was brought them by those priests, who were sent to instruct those schismatics, after their being infested by

[1] Those who contradict Aristæus's story may consult the learned Joseph Scaliger, in his Notes upon Eusebius.

lions; and it is doubted whether that of the Seventy was the first version out of the Hebrew, or rather that of the Chaldean before Esdras. Nor is it unlikely that at least some part thereof might have been done before; since both poets and historians, even amongst the Heathen, mention so many things in their stories and fictions, which they could no where have learnt but from some of those Holy Books. So that from hence it is, that St. Cyril calls Plato and Aristotle *thieves* and *robbers;* but, as we formerly noted, they concealed their thefts, because the Jews were so despised a nation.

But to proceed with translations and editions, which were in Theodoret's time, as he affirms, almost innumerable. The next after the Greek might be the Syriac, (a tongue so near to the Hebrew as sometimes to be called Hebrew) not long since discovered, and of most excellent use by the universal suffrage of learned men, as being thought to be as ancient as the Apostles' time, before the Canon was settled; for it has not the Epistle of St. Peter, nor St. John's story of the adulteress, nor the Apocalypse. It is also held to come nearest the Original of any version, and therefore the most uncorrupted. It was likewise consecrated (as it were) by our Saviour and the Apostles, who preached in that tongue, and which, though at this day by the Turks introducing Arabic words, not so purely spoken in those countries, was then vernacular, and is yet used by all the Christians in sacred offices, and divers learned books on all subjects are still written in it.

There is, likewise, of the Oriental versions, that of the Arabic, and very ancient, it being even at this day

the most universal language in the whole world, as well as the most elegant and copious. They have not the Doxology, at the end of the *Lord's Prayer*, which, being wont to be set in the margins, did, it seems, creep into the text. There are also left out the seventh and eighth verses of I. John, 5, which is likewise a mark of the antiquity of that translation; those verses being added (as is believed) after the condemnation of Arius, as found in very few copies before.

The Abyssinians and Ethiopians have had all the Holy Scriptures from the Seventy, which doubtless was delivered to them by the Apostles, after the conversion of the Eunuch by Philip. It was left out of our *Walton's Polyglott*, because it could not be procured since the Queen of Sweden, who once had it, lost it out of her famous library.

The Persians have, moreover, the Holy Books in their tongue; but by whom translated is not known. The language is much corrupted from the ancient Persian; and what this was we are in the dark. Some of their words yet remain in the Book of Esther, Daniel, Nehemiah, Esdras.[1]

In the mean while, the Pentateuch having been translated into that language by a Jew, out of the Hebrew, for the use of his countrymen among that nation, does wonderfully illustrate that passage of Jacob's prophecy concerning the Messiah. We have a very ancient copy of the Gospels out of the Syriac text, which corroborates the esteem of that ancient version.

Other versions there were, as that of Aquila, a Jew (A. D. 128), Theodosian, and Symmachus, which the

[1] Wheelock published the Persian Gospel.

learned Origen disposed into his famous and elaborate Hexapla (called the *Adamantine*, for the pains he took in collecting them), adding a fifth and sixth, and so made it an *Octapla*. But the three first revolting from the Church to Judaism were soon rejected by it, and their versions happily lost, as being very corrupt; that, therefore, of the Septuagint has continued its esteem, as doubtless the very best; nor did the Greek Church use any other. It is confessed that it seems, in many places, to have paraphrased rather than actually and accurately translated, but so that neither our Blessed Saviour nor His Apostles ever altered it, citing any text; and it being translated long before our Lord's Incarnation, takes away all pretence of its having been interpolated by the Christians since. Besides, the Apocryphal Books *omitted* by them is a good evidence against their canonization, though, it must be confessed, that some of those pieces were not then extant.

Come we now to the Latin. And, first of the *Vulgate*, or *Vetus*, as thought almost as ancient as the Apostles' time; (and, indeed, how could they be without it, that language being so widely spread through all the Roman world?) translated from the Septuagint. Who was the author is not known. That also called the *Itala* was mended by St. Jerome out of the Hebrew. He indeed translated the Bible out of the Hebrew and Greek twice; of both which is the *Vulgate* now in use. And, though there is nothing in it *against the Faith*, yet never esteemed authentic, till they made it so at Trent. Nor do we refuse the *Vulgate*, but use and prefer it for its author, who was chiefly this learned Doctor. Not because that Council said he was divinely assisted

(whilst he arrogates no such thing himself), but because he follows the Hebrew text *ad verbum*,[1] where the Septuagint has rather paraphrased. This seeming somewhat to depreciate that renowned version, made his friend St. Augustine so concerned and angry, that, as not being qualified with that public authority, it was hardly at last, after many years, and a tacit consent, made public use of; and then the old version was laid by, till restored now again of late in this age of ours.[2]

St. Jerome's version, therefore, was but a private work, done at his famous Recess at Bethlehem, by the assistance of his Hebrew master, Barabanus. What he did upon the New Testament was but mending and comparing certain places with the Greek; what on the Old (as we showed), disliked at first, and not received till after his decease. And, indeed, though he made many *Prologues* and *Apologies* for attempting to put the Holy Books into Latin (it having been done so well in the Vulgate before), yet came his also to be called the *Vulgar*, for its after so frequent use.

Thus, after St. Jerome, were few or no more attempts; till about A. D. 1500, or 1600, Lyranus and Burgensis corrected, and Isodorus Clarus translated it; but not from the Hebrew text, till Pagninus, in 1623. After that, the *Complutensian*, being that of Nobilius, and, from the ancient text *de novo*, Sebastian Munster,

[1] See Esdras, xvi.

[2] Note, that *the Psalms* remained yet in the Vulgate, and are not St. Jerome's, but were left as he found them in the *Vetus*, because the people had them so perfectly by heart; and so, with the rest of those Books which the Jews received not into the Canon, he meddled not—a good argument against the *Apocrypha*.

Osiander, the elegant Castalio, the Tigurin, Vatablus, Junius, and some others.

But now comes Sextus Quintus, with his new edition of it, which he pronounces so exact, as made it *anathema* once to doubt of its perfection above all other. And yet, Clement the Seventh produces yet a new one, detecting the errors of his predecessors, and denouncing the same curse on those who did not submit to his translation, above all that went before; so as to leave the ancient Churches, who never had the Latin, nor have as yet, nor, if they had, do not understand it, in a sad condition. So charitable a Mother is the Roman Lady!

Besides the version mentioned, St. Jerome translated the Scriptures into the Dalmatian, his country's language; St. Chrysostom, into the Armenian; St. Augustine, into Punic; St. Cyril, or Methodius, into the Sclavonian; Ulphilus, into Gothic; Venerable Bede, into the Saxon; into the German, Melchior Adam; John, Bishop of Seville, into the Arabic; Jacobus *de Voragine*, into the old Italian; Leopoldus, into the Polonian; into old French, Charles the Fifth, their king.

Of later days, the Doctors at Douay published their Bible, with a Comment full of trash. Erasmus, the Greek Testament.

Amongst the Protestants, the most received was that of Tremelins, a converted Jew, compared with the Hebrew text, and that of Junius. But the most elegant New Testament, that of Theodore Beza, carries the voice among the foreign Reformed Churches, who yet is thought sometimes to have taken too great liberty, as in St. Luke, ix., 48, 53, and I. Cor., xv., 55.

Since these, there are, in the vulgar tongues, that of John Diodati, in Italian, whose both translation and notes, upon the difficult places, are worthily esteemed; as is also the paraphrase of our learned and pious *Dr. Hammond.*

There was an old translation into English, done by the holy martyr Tyndal; and, in Queen Elizabeth's time, another after the Genoa Bible, with Notes and ample Concordance. But that which was afterwards published and reformed, by command of King James the First, is thought to be one of the very best of the modern, yet capable of improvement. There is one of nearly four hundred years since, extant in the St. James's Library.

I think most of the Bible and all the New Testament has been translated very elegantly by the Jansenists, into French, called the *Testament Port-Royal.*

It has also been translated into Welsh, or ancient Gaul, by order of our pious princes, and into Irish and Turkish, by Mr. Seaman. And thus went out their sound into all the world.

Now, as touching the several editions, briefly: *the Venetian* is the Aldine. Another is the Roman, from the Vatican copy, a very ancient MS., by Cardinal Caraffa, which is much esteemed.

Jay published his pompous Paris Edition, the very worst of all, and most expensive.

Lastly, that of the learned and laborious Dr. Walton, late Bishop of Chester, from the Alexandrian Manuscript, sent by Sir Thomas Roe to the blessed martyr, King Charles the First, from Cyril Leucaris, who brought it from Alexandria, when he was translated

thence Patriarch to Constantinople, and is now in his Majesty's library at St. James's;[1] all written in capitals, upon parchment, without distinction of chapter, verse, or even words, excepting now and then a section. This speaks it of very great antiquity; and it is said to have been written by Tecla, a noble lady, about 1300 years since, or a little after the first Nicene Council, altogether equal, if not superior, to that so celebrated one of the Vatican.

But, first I should have mentioned the Hebrew text, with the Masorite punctuation and Latin version *verbatim*. Then the Samaritan Pentateuch, in the ancient Hebrew character, common both to Jews and Samaritans, before Esdras altered it for the Chaldee, because the long-captived Jews had forgotten their own language. Then is placed the Septuagint, and, next it, the above-mentioned *Tecla's*. After this, the *Vetus Vulgate*, in Latin, from the Seventy, promiscuously used (as we have shown) with St. Jerome's, till Gregory the Great; from both which sprung the *Vulgate Hodierna*, corrected by Popes Sextus V. and Clement VIII.

Then follows the Chaldee paraphrase, the Hierosolymitan Pentateuch; that of Jonathan and the Persian paraphrase; the Ethiopic Psalter, and New Testament; the Syriac version of the Old Testament; the Arabic and Greek of Robert Stephens; all interlined with the Latin, and so accommodated as, at one view, one is master of them all, to the wonderful ease of the reader. In this the painful compiler has outdone the

[1] [This extensive and costly library of MSS. was transferred, as a gift to the public, to the British Museum, by the munificence of George II.]

famous attempt of the learned Origen's *Octapla;* and all that have come after to this day.

SECTION IV.

1. INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE.

The consent of all these laborious and famous versions, which is admirable, considering the several dialects, idioms, phrases, and other innumerable circumstances, is an undeniable argument of the truth in all necessaries to salvation. And this, notwithstanding all those various lections, whose differences are only in more minute points, almost impossible to have been avoided in so many translations and transcribers, whom God did not think fit to make infallible; in order to excite the study and diligence of the faithful, by preserving copies, comparing and searching the Scriptures, whilst the sense and text remained entire which most concerned them; so that all Morini's and Simon's objections fall to the ground. The learned Louis Capellus[1] shows how these divers readings have, by a wonderful Providence, preserved rather the Holy text, in such places as are most important; and many great and pious Divines, instead of impediments, have found them helps; whilst in any difficulty they have recourse to the analogy of faith, ancient versions, writings of the Fathers, and the like collations for that reading which consents with antecedent, consequent, and parallel places, with the argument of other copies, &c.

Besides, the certainty of the text may be gathered by any of the novel helps of points and accents, as it is

[1] Capell. Crit. Sacra, l. vi., c. 5.

both in the Syrian, Arabian, Persian, &c., and in cases of ambiguity, by the help above-said. For, as to that of Cainan's slipping into the text of Luke, in our Saviour's genealogy, it is likely it was from the impertinence of the transcriber, who, seeing it in the margin, put it into the text; for ancient copies have it not.[1] This being so, we are not concerned at the cavils of Rushworth, who, in his Dialogues, would invalidate the Holy Scriptures, to advance his tradition; upon evidence (as he pretends it) of common sense, that they, being so full of doubts as to the genuine translations and transcripts even of the Originals, filled with such numberless *errata*, and men's skill in those languages being so imperfect; with other prejudices of that sort, it seemed as evident to common sense that the Scriptures produce no distinct resolution of controversy, though otherwise indeed useful for instruction in virtue, and so tending to discover the truth in matters of faith *in gross* only; and being read rather to know what is in it than to judge by it; but expecting from tradition what is definite and certain, and so maintain the infallibility of the present Roman Church.[2]

To this is answered that, if such uncertainty be in either original or version,[3] then are we as uncertain whether ever God made any such covenant as we read of with Abraham, or gave Moses such a law, or at all spake so by the Prophets. For, according to these, all this is uncertain; and so is let in a place for Atheists, which already believe nothing of this.

[1] See Sparnheim, in his Dub. Evangel. Disput.

[2] To the same sense, the late Richard Simon, in his "Critical Hist. of Old and New Testament."

[3] Mr. Thorndike.

If the Scriptures deceive us, which are written Records, how much more obnoxious are we to oral tradition! If there be such difficulties in expression of our minds, when we deliberate about what we write, how much more subject are we to mistake in speaking! Verbal reports we experimentally find so very inconstant and apt to err, and misrepresent things, done even in our own time and very neighbourhood, either by concealing the truth of narrations, or adding to them; and of this, indeed, common sense is a proper judge. Nay, why (if this be otherwise) do men take such wondrous care about their deeds and legal evidences, which concern their temporal estates only, if writing be not more certain and less apt to err than words? Wherefore, whatsoever is taught in Christianity is to be proved by Scripture, whether tradition or laws of the Church, though the evidence may depend on common sense.

Now, whatever can be pretended to come from the Apostles must first have been delivered by them in the Hebrew or Syriac; at least, in that language they spake, and which was so very near the Hebrew of the Old Testament, that in the New it is called by that name. From this being translated into Greek or Latin, it must have come afterwards into the now modern and vulgar languages. Now, can the meaning of the Apostles' words be more certain than the meaning of the written word? Let common sense judge. And if this be not so, to what purpose were the Israelites enjoined to read and teach them to their children in the written law? Why did Christ our Lord bid us search the Scriptures? Why are the Bereans so celebrated

for doing it, to find the truth of what was preached to them? In a word, wherefore is Dives sent to Moses and the Prophets? And why is it said that "all things written in Scripture are for our learning that, through patience and comfort of the Scripture, we might have hope?" and that all Scripture, inspired by God, is profitable for so many occasions? And, lastly, wherefore did the Fathers, who wrote so many volumes against the heretics, allege Scripture continually against them? Shall we say they had not common sense? It is a monstrous assertion, that nothing but probable truths can be made out by Scripture; peremptory and infallible ones by tradition.

Then, as for Copies. It is very rare that the same error falls out in most Copies; and, if not, then is there little danger of perverting the sense, there being so many Copies to correct the peccant. In sum, unless it be what the Socinian takes hold of from three or four questionable texts about the Holy Trinity, in other matters (notwithstanding the divers readings so much talked of), there are none of any consequence, there being evidence besides sufficient to preponderate all that seems to interrupt.

Then, as to Languages. Certainly, those who spake those learned tongues understood what they spake, and heard others speak or write. The Books having been preserved so carefully among the Jews some ages even after Christ's Ascension, and how capable of expressing any the most abstruse matter, let what Maimonides has written convince the doubter.

As for the Greek, the writings of the Apostles and citations of our Blessed Saviour sufficiently manifest

that the versions were agreeable even in the most difficult places of the Old Testament. Add to this the translations of the Scriptures into so many languages from the original, preventing the errors in the Copies, and fixes the true reading, as the comparing of them does their meaning and genuine sense. There have, indeed, been attempts, from time to time, to corrupt the Copies of the Holy Scriptures, to make them speak to the sense of men's opinions; some by inserting words and periods, others by paraphrase, and some again pretending to put them into better Greek. Of this an instance is in that MS. (Greek and Latin), given by Beza to the University of Cambridge. Of which he says, *Tantam in Lucæ præsertim Evangelio repertam esse, inter hunc Codicem et cæteros quantumvis veteres, discrepantiam, ut, vitandæ quorundam offensionis asservandum, potiusquàm publicandum existimârit.* But, since these petulancies have little or no effect as to the sincerity of faith, and that there remain so many other incontestable helps to discern the true reading, we shall need say no more upon this article.

We have further, for assistance of reading and understanding of difficulties, (besides the many modern helps) the Paraphrastical version, in the Chaldean tongue, which was written about the time of Jonathan and Onkelos, and which the Jews esteemed so sacred, that they reported that, if but a silly fly lighted upon it, it was immediately consumed by fire from heaven, with other wondrous stories. However this be even idolized, the Targum of Inachar is of great use, as being written before our Saviour's time, who, according with it, cited that of the twenty-second Psalm. It likewise attri-

butes creation to the Word, as to a distinct person, and as often mention of the Messiah coming, to be born of a Virgin. It is written in the Chaldæo-Syriac, which was (as it is said) the vernacular of our Lord; the pure Hebrew having long before been corrupted in the captivity.

It is very true that the Hebrew tongue, having very few, that is to say, about 1022 roots, the rest being derivative, occasions the using of the same words to express several things, and may, now and then, occasion mistake. But this, happening chiefly in the appellation of things, makes little to the prejudice of the main; the names of plants, stones, animals, colours, habits, &c., the Hebrews had but few of those known to us. And so of proper names hard to turn into other languages, as *Chaffai* (Heb.), *Eve* in Greek; *Tor* for *Tyrus;* and divers things are expressed by tropes and figures, as God's appearances, angels, &c.[1] Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, are put for the whole Israelitish people. The words rendered "for ever and ever" do not always signify absolute duration. Sometimes, the whole is by *Synecdoche* put for the part, as when Christ is said to be three days in the grave; whereas, it was but one whole day, namely, Saturday, and part of Friday and Sunday. *Blood* is also often used for homicide. And, in the Prophetic style, *time* and *times*, and half a time, for three years and a half. The *river* for Euphrates; *Babylon* for Rome; *salt*, by metaphor, for incorruption. Frequent ironies occur, as in the third

[1] There are various acceptations of the word *spirit*, &c., about which Spinosa heaps so many instances to little purpose, besides ostentation of being skilled in the Hebrew.

of Genesis;[1] and the last of the twenty-first of John's Gospel is spoken by *hyperbole*. *Vessel* is put for the body; *horn* for power; the *rock* for Christ and the Church. *Women* and *daughters* for cities and countries. *Hypallage*, He set his tabernacle in the sun; and by *Anthropopathia*, the members and senses of men.

Sometimes, again, symbols, hieroglyphics, &c., are made use of; but, whilst taking and observing these rules, the genuine sense is no way difficult in material points. For, where the words of Holy Scripture may properly be understood without wresting, we are to take them as they lie before us, without trope or figure, but natural construction; unless, by doing so, any absurdity follow, which is easily perceived. If any obscurer passage be met with, we shall find it as plain, and in some more perspicuous, and then take the latter. *Magnificè* (says St. Augustine) *et salubriter Spiritus Sanctus ita Scripturas modificavit, ut locis apertioribus fami occurreret, obscurioribus fastigia detegeret. Nihil enim ferè de illis obscuritatibus eruitur, quod non planissimè dictum alibi reperiatur.*[2] To the same sense Clemens:[3] "There is no darkness in the Word."

To this so universal are the voices of the Fathers as would fill a volume to repeat, showing how plain they are to the very ignorant; and yet, how mysterious soever, discoverable to those who studiously mind them. "The Holy Scriptures declare all things clearly,"[4] says

[1] "Behold, the man is become one of us, to know good and evil, and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat and live for ever:" ver. 22.

[2] De doct. Christ., xi., 6.

[3] Clem. in Protrept.

[4] Αἱ ἁγίαι γράφαι πάντα σαφῶς διαλέγονται.

Athanasius, speaking of the Deity of the Holy Ghost. And to the same purpose Epiphanius, and many others. What, then, can more encourage us to the searching of those Scriptures, in which lie the treasures of eternal life?

But to proceed with the rest of those rules, which holy and exercised men have recommended for direction of the greater difficulties, "things hard to be understood;" and of such there are not a few. In obscure passages, we take the *minimum*, as uncertain how much is meant; for, if it mean the most, it is certain that the least is included in it. In ambiguities, it is safest to take both senses; and, in controversies, where strong arguments are produced for both opinions, to follow that which includes the most, lest the truth escape us.

The Thomists and Monks fancy, as if every individual text had an exposition analogical, historical, and moral, a mere Jewish fancy. Where, therefore, Scriptures are dubious, and have a latitude, though we misunderstand them, it is no crime, provided we do our best not to be deceived. For our understandings are not free, as are our wills; and this is a solid argument to me, that if our Blessed Lord had laid such stress (as too many now do upon such things), and had constituted an infallible understanding, an indispensable condition of our salvation, He who bore that infinite love to mankind would never have left things necessary to salvation obscure and dubious, much less insuperable, His only design being to save those who believed in Him. Nor will a single error, not contracted through our own fault, destroy us. God will, questionless, allow and make abatement for natural and invincible

infirmities, and other circumstances of constitution, education, &c., by which any may be fatally inclined to such and such persuasion. Nor will He suffer any pious person, who humbly and devoutly seeks to know His will, and resolves to live thereafter, to perish for want of sufficient direction to do his duty, though there may be many places of which he does not attain the true meaning, and which yet are necessary to be known upon other occasions and purposes, at one time or other, by those who are more enlightened. He who seeks the Scripture, with all the faith of the Church for his rule, shall find the truth; understanding by this faith what he was taught at his baptism and after-instruction, as motives of his faith.

But we are yet farther to mark likewise the scope, intention, and coherence of the authors; since bare Scripture-letter is not the word of God, but the sense and meaning of the Scripture. Wherefore, places are to be compared according to analogy of faith, universal tradition (I say *universal*, according to Lirinensis' comprehension) with what Councils have established, Fathers, pious and learned men have written, but by no means, and for reverence to any of these, taking any sense in opposition to any Article of the Creed, by all the ancients called *the rule and standard of faith.*

With this caution we are also to enquire at the priest's lips; for no prophecy is of private interpretation.[1] To this add, skill in the original tongues and idioms, with all other moral helps. For the interpretation of Holy Scriptures, how evident soever, is certainly a great mystery, considered as to its end. We

[1] Mal., ii., 7; II. Pet., i., 20.

should, therefore, address ourselves with great modesty and veneration, imploring assistance from the Lamb of the tribe of Judah, who opens and no man shuts, and shuts, and no man opens; even He who has the Key of David, the Son of David, Christ the Word Himself. Besides, the greatest difficulties lie in the Old Testament, which is rather a sealed book, than the New. And yet, through the great and extraordinary care of the Jews, the variety of readings were not nearly so many, or material, as those in the New. But then, neither are we without mighty helps from the most learned Commentators, amongst whom the incomparable Grotius has deserved the highest esteem of the Church, and may indeed serve *instar omnium.*

Now, when we say all things necessary to salvation are (after all these difficulties, and qualifications to their right understanding) plain in Scripture,[1] it is not meant as if all were evident by the plain and literal words of the text only, which is necessary for every Christian to believe, without any other help; or that an extraordinary spirit directed, without first believing all things necessary to salvation; but that there is any danger in not conceiving alike of all things in Scripture; but the not believing all things true from its Author. Since there are many things in Scripture, which are not Articles of Faith; and though it be necessary to salvation to believe all

[1] As from these texts: Deut., iv., 2, 29; Rev., xi., 18, 19; Gal. i., 8, 9; John, xx., 30, 31; Ps., xix., cxix.; Isa., lix., 12, 13; Jer., xxxi., 32; Matt., xi., 28, 29; John, i., 14, &c. Besides that famous passage of the Father: In eis quæ apertè in Scripturis posita sunt, inveniuntur illa omnia, quæ continent fidem, mores vivendi; as intending and persuading to sanctify of life. (Aug. De Doct. Christ. ii., c. 9.) And so, in St. Chrysostom. Hom., iii., ad II. Thess.

that the Scripture says, to be true, yet it is not necessary to know all the Scripture contains. Origen (in Levit., Hom., 5) shows, that some things there are in Scripture, reserved to the knowledge of God alone; nay, says Irenæus (ii., 47) even for the world to come, that men may always learn, and God may teach. In the mean time, true believers have the Spirit of God, by which they try and examine what things and interpretations agree with, or dissent from, the common Christianity.

This is the Unction from above mentioned by St. John, not because the gifts of the Holy Ghost impart a promise of understanding all truths, but because it supposes the knowledge of what is necessary to salvation, namely, the common Christianity. That extraordinary grace which the Apostles had of expounding Scripture, and which Justin Martyr[1] affirms, continued in the Church to his time, was imparted on consideration of their professing the faith of Christ; and tended only to discover those grounds, on which the Church still proceeds, in the use of ordinary reason, to expound the Word, that is, besides the letter of the text, the universal consent of the Church. Thus the author[2] of the *Commonitorium* confesses the Canon of Scripture to be every way perfect, and sufficient, with the tradition of the Church, for the understanding of it. And yet, though a man may be obliged to believe that which is not in the Scripture to have been instituted even by the Apostles, yet he is not obliged to observe it, but upon that reason which Scripture delivers. Nor is it necessary, as some pretend of late, that we have express

[1] Dialog. Tryph. [2] Vincent. Lyrinens's.

Scripture for every thing we do or speak,[1] but that the reason of all we do and say be derived from the doctrine which the Scripture declares. All is plain in Scripture, supposing the rule of faith received from the Church to limit the sense and exposition of it; as in the Doctrine of *the Trinity, Christ's Real Presence in the Sacrament*, &c. We must carry ever the faith of the Church with us, and then we cannot err. Scriptures are hidden to them, who neglect this rule; whence that of Origen:[2] "the ignorant profit by reading Scripture, after they are initiated, catechized, and instructed in the faith beforehand;" for so they were at baptism.

There is nothing necessary to salvation in Scripture, but what may be manifest by the use and application of such means as the Scripture directs; for, otherwise, that which should dissolve all doubts ought itself to be most clear, which we see it is not; nor were all the Scriptures written when St. Paul[3] alleged that, being inspired by God, it was profitable to qualify the man of God to preach Christianity to others; divers parts of the New Testament being not then penned; and St. John anathematizes those who should falsify or corrupt any part of the Scripture or the sense of it. But the Apostle's meaning was, that there was in the Old Testament then extant what shadowed and typified the New, the right understanding whereof directed to the understanding of the Gospel; and, consequently, furnishing the man of God to propagate it. And thus did our Blessed Savour mean, when he

[1] Omne quod loquimur, debemus affirmare ex Scripturis Sanctis. St. Jerome, in Psal. 98.

[2] Contra Celsum. [3] II. Tim., iii., 16, 17.

opened the understandings of His disciples, (after his resurrection) that they might comprehend the Scriptures; and by these books did the Bereans compare and examine the doctrine they taught.

It is certainly sufficient, and of God's infinite goodness, says the learned Thorndyke, and agreeable to those means whereby He convinces the world of the truth of that religion we contend for, that He gives those whom it concerns such means to discern the truth of things as, being rightly applied, are of themselves enough to create a resolution as certain as the weight of any controversy shall require. For such is the Scripture, containing the sense of it, within those bounds, which the rule of faith and the laws given the Church by our Lord and His Apostles do limit. For what is plainer than to discern what the whole body of the Church has agreed in? what not? What is manifestly consequent to the same? what not? What is agreeable to the ground and end of those laws, which the Church first received from our Lord and His Apostles? what not?

That no interpretation of the Scriptures, repugnant to the consent of the Fathers, ought to be alleged, is a prudent injunction, which, had it been observed (I mean, the Fathers of the five first centuries) well had it been for all the Church and the Christian world; the infallibility pretended by the present Roman, and traditions of the Universal Church being infinitely wide and inconsistent with Scripture; as, on the other side, the trying by Scripture alone, without bringing the consent of all the Catholic Church into consequence. Witness the Socinian.

With these directions, cautions, and limitations, are the Scriptures truly *self-sufficient*,[1] (as St. Athanasius calls them) as to necessaries to salvation, not as always needing all those helps, but corroborated by them. For, as to the rules of faith, what can Fathers, what Councils do, or any other aid, than determine that, expressly and distinctly, which has been simply held and asserted from the beginning?

2. RULE OF FAITH.

Now the principal end of man being his eternal felicity, and, consequently, to know and rightly understand the proper means to attain that end, infinitely it concerns us to inquire it out. And, though all Christians acknowledge that the law and service of the Almighty God, laid down and revealed in Scripture, is that means; yet are many learned and other zealous men not agreed how to understand and interpret it, partly through pride of their own opinion and other human prejudices;[2] I say, these prejudices and disagreements cast away many holy and excellent persons in great difficulties and doubts, to the great disturbance of the world, and ruin of one of the most necessary graces—Christian Charity.

To come to a steady resolution, then, and acquiescency in this particular, after all we have hitherto said, and with which we shall conclude this tedious though important Chapter, will best be done, by inquiring, once

[1] Αὐτάρκεις. Orat. ad Gent.

[2] An instance of this we have in Maldonat, (a Spanish Jesuit) who, though highly approving an explanation, confessed indeed it was the very best, but, because it was *Calvin's*, he would reject it.

for all, which is the Rule of Faith, and whether there is any more moral certitude of such a thing. By Rule of Faith, we mean all the Articles or Doctrines of the Christian Faith, necessary to salvation.

Papists will have it in a General Council, confirmed by the Pope, defining what the rule is; some in the Council alone, some in the Pope; some in oral tradition, or living voice of the Church: all these without dependance on Scripture. Further, that, this being the ground and foundation, these are the interpreters and definers to conclude and declare the meaning and sense of the infallibility, by promise of the Holy Ghost's assistance.

To this we find, in the first place, that a General Council confirmed by Popes have erred in faith; therefore, that cannot be the *Rule of Faith;* for Popes have been heretics, and have taught heresy, by Papists' own confession, Gratian, Gerson, and Bellarmine himself. Now, though some affirm that the Pope cannot err as universal pastor, yet we know he can, and has erred; and the Catholic Church was confirmed in all necessary truths, hundreds of years before any General Council was.

To the second: That a free General Council, without the Pope, by their skill in theology and scholastical learning, may define this rule without erring is uncertain; because still they can, by all they know, only do their best endeavour, there being no certain evident revelation that they are in the right, farther than probability. For though the Holy Spirit's assistance is promised in the due use of the means, yet, unless they certainly know they have rightly made use of that

means, they cannot be infallible. Now, to know that is impossible, unless the means made use of do evidently discover it, for whatever is not the pure word is fallacious.

To the third: Oral tradition, which Papists affirm to have been ever the same, down to our age, without interruption, so that these, finding the infirmity of the two former, build on this as the surest footing. This is but a late assertion, and therefore cannot be the rule, seeing it was not always so believed so to be, but one of the two above, and therefore had interruption, as in the Arian heresy. The Council of Trent also did not rely upon it,[1] wherein saintly and apostolical tradition are contradistinguished. And, besides, it is known abundantly, divers of the new articles of faith, purgatory, transubstantiation, &c., had their beginning but of late, and were not delivered as such articles. So that, after all, the Rule of Faith is certainly the Holy Scripture only, as being clear in all things necessary to all illuminated Christians. Others there be who hold that all these truths are evident to every understanding; so that, according to both, Holy Scripture is still the rule.

Now, the former made use of tradition as historically asserting them to be the Books of Scripture, not upon account of tradition, but for its own cause, safe light, and spirituality. The enthusiasts hold Divine inspiration their guide for interpreting them; others, the light within them, as independent of Scripture, and so pretend what they please, but without any miracle to confirm it, as the Apostles had: so that these new guides cannot exclude a former established Divine law,

[1] Decree I, Sess. 4.

as did our Blessed Saviour, when he abrogated that of Moses.

As to those who affirm the rule and necessary fundamentals of faith evident to every understanding explicitly, it is very unlikely that mechanics, labourers, women, &c., though they can read, should arrive at it without the Church's sense; since, if otherwise, many heresies would be maintained by Scripture. Some, then, were undoubtedly entrusted to show their meaning, weigh the circumstances of every place, compare places, distinguish what are most material truths, and what opposite, and thence to draw inferences.

The result of all appears, then, to be this: the Church Catholic diffusive cannot err in fundamentals; but she cannot immediately declare her thoughts to every particular individual member, as to what she holds points of Faith, deducible from Scripture; but, by employing her pastors and ministers, either by letter, writing, or votes in council, to make it known to every person. Now, such places of Scripture are as plainly to be understood as they are in any such teaching, writing, or definition of council; such may be as certainly learned out of Scripture as by the traditions of the Church; and those traditions and definitions, being compared with Scripture, appearing plainly to be the meaning, are then indeed, and not till then, to be embraced as the true meaning.

If oral tradition can be made plain to be truth by parallel texts of Scripture, tradition in that case is good. But, when no testimonies aver the same thing, if one be of divine, the other of human authority, the former ought to have pre-eminence. Seeing, then, the

testimony of Scripture is divine (as being confessed the Word of God), and tradition but human, as delivered in various expressions of pastors, parents, tutors, masters of families, nurses, &c., it is most reasonable Faith should be resolved into Scripture, as its rule, and not tradition. Nay, though tradition may, perhaps, in some things be thought more plain than Scripture (as in explaining that of Christ's Divinity in the Nicene Creed), yet should Scripture still be esteemed the text, and tradition but its best comment. And so, doubtless, the disciples of the Apostles, after the New Testament was published, did confirm what they had been taught *orally* by the Apostles, out of the Written Word; because the sayings of Christ himself and divinely inspired Apostles must needs be thought of greater authority than their own, though believed ever so certainly true by those they taught.

From all these premises we then conclude, the Holy Scripture, that is, such places as contain necessary points for belief and practice, is the true and only true Rule of Faith; yet so as that, without the help of tradition, it cannot be known to be the Word of God uncorrupt; nor those necessarily manifest so to be, without a continued miracle and immediate revelation. For, were it otherwise, every body would have understood it, and held it, even before the Scripture was written in the several languages of the people, who yet became good Christians. Nor could ignorant and unlettered persons read, and know assuredly it was rightly translated and uncorrupt, nor have judgment to select and cull out those which were fundamental from other texts less necessary. Wherefore, of necessity, they

must fly to and trust other men qualified, namely, to the *Ecclesia Docens*, which are the Bishops, pastors, and spiritual guides, to whom the *Depositum* is entrusted, yet not but that the laity may and must search the Scriptures, to encourage and edify, so as they oppose not their judgment to that of their teachers, whose office and calling it is, and who have studied all those qualifications required to fit them, and are called to the unction by mission successively derived from Christ and His Apostles, and are acquainted with whatever has all along been the faith of the Christian Church to this day; especially considering that God has, in the economy of the world, provided and placed men, skilled and expert in several things, without which all would turn to disorder and confusion. Wherefore, we conclude, with St. Augustine,[1] *Scriptura doctrinæ nostræ regulam figit;* or that, rather, of its Blessed Author: "This is my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye Him."[2]

Thus have we all that a rational man can modestly, or even immodestly, require for the truth that any history is capable of, both internally, from the nature of credibility and sensibility of the objects, knowledge, and integrity of the writers, eye-witnesses; the way, manner, and style of writing; and, externally, from its reception and entertainment in the world, universal consent and concurrence, and that even of strangers as others; nay, even the confessions of adversaries, the testimony of prophecies, miracles, preservation, harmony, sublime matter and effects; antiquity, tradition, and all those other topics we have produced. These

[1] De bono Viduitatis. [2] See Matt., xvii., 5.

have asserted the books, copies, versions, and interpretations of Holy Scripture to be the Word of God, and derivable from it; I say, so asserted, as no other history in the world has ever showed the like, to justify any matter of fact whatsoever. The sum, then, of all this is, that God would have the mysteries of our salvation and holy faith conveyed to us by writing, after the Apostles had now immediately preached them; and both these in a time when they could not be supposed to be corrupted, whilst they were received by infinite numbers of proselytes; cited by a cloud of witnessess, learned Fathers, and Doctors; preserved in a thousand places, wherever the persecutions had driven the professors. They write, as they speak, with all plainness; and the Greek version was known and used by all, without criticizing, or defect found, or blamed by the Apostles, nay, or by our Blessed Saviour himself; they having more regard to what the Scripture taught and proved, than to the placing of words or manner of expression. And it is a mercy and signal Providence that, for all those cavils and pretences that difficult men contend so much about, there are so few to the number of the places which contain the fundamental truths and rules necessary to salvation. They left, in the mean time, the composing of the canon to their disciples, not as containing perhaps all that the Apostles might write, but as much as was necessary; and, for the *various readings*, it is apparent they change nothing material to its prejudice; the substance of our religion and rule of faith being so effectually twisted and interwoven, through all the Sacred Volumes, as is sufficient to characterize them the pure and undoubted

word of God; and that, above all other writings, they are to sanctify the hearts of those who meditate on them, and to dispose us to all manner of virtue and holy living.

It is not, therefore, from the decrees of Popes and determination of Councils, or the dictate of private spirits, (with the enthusiasts) or interpretations, nor the laws and edicts of Princes (which our *Esprits forts*, mere pretenders to reason and philosophy, would maintain, and are the engines by which sectaries have prevailed, to impose upon the world, both in former days and now of late in ours) whereby the Scriptures are proved to be the only truth divinely inspired, and to be embraced; but by the force and cogency of the reasons and arguments we have alleged, accompanied with the most authentic human testimony that was ever yet produced, which compels us to assent that the Canonical Books of Scripture are the undoubted Oracles of God; the pillar and ground of our faith.[1]

It was, therefore, most highly important and needful to weigh and well consider this matter; since upon this ground and pillar the whole superstructure stands; and upon the strength of which we adventure the eternal interest of our most precious souls.

[1] I. Tim., iii., 15.

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ΤΟΥΤΟ ΠΟΙΕΙΤΕ ΕΙΣ ΤΗΝ ΕΜΗΝ ΑΝΑΜΝΗΣΙΝ

THE

HISTORY OF RELIGION.

A RATIONAL ACCOUNT

OF

THE TRUE RELIGION.

BY

JOHN EVELYN,

AUTHOR OF "SYLVA," ETC.

NOW FIRST PUBLISHED,

BY PERMISSION OF W. J. EVELYN, ESQ., M.P.,

FROM THE ORIGINAL MS. IN THE LIBRARY AT WOTTON.

"Be ready always to give an answer to every man, that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear."—I. PET., iii., 15.

"I am verily persuaded that errors shall not be imputed to them as sin, who use such measures of industry in finding Truth, as human prudence and ordinary discretion (their abilities and opportunities, their distractions and hindrances, and all other things considered) shall advise them to."—CHILLINGWORTH.

EDITED, WITH NOTES,

BY THE REVEREND R. M. EVANSON, B.A.,

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Page 254, note; for "Bramwell" read Bramhall.
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SECTION I.

OF THE TRUE AND SUPERNATURAL RELIGION, DEDUCED FROM SCRIPTURE.

It is not sufficient what religion one be of, nor is it the Law of Nature, nor the command of the magistrate (according to the Hobbian system), which ought to determine our choice and obedience; but, as we have shown, what God has revealed in Holy Scriptures. For, without a peculiar grace, never could mankind have arrived to the knowledge of the True Religion, and the way to the worship of the True God, who was to be worshipped in spirit and in truth; but which all their reason and natural light, and sagacity in other things, enabled them only to grope after, as that igno-

rant inscription implied, though of the most learned Athenians; because it is altogether supernatural.

It is in this chapter, therefore, that we shall sufficiently make evident by Scripture (which we have abundantly asserted to be the Word of God), that there is indeed, and never was, but one True Religion, as we have shown there is but one God, who is the Creator, Upholder, and Restorer of all things. For God, though most wise, is not yet so fond as to be pleased with whatsoever is well meant, as with what He expressly commands and expects, for the great reward proposed. And therefore it is not so indifferent a thing what faith or religion men choose, so they be zealous in it, as some erroneously affirm. God, who esteems obedience better than sacrifice, will be served in His own, not in our way.

Indeed, Natural Religion goes a great way, convincing us that there is a God, and therefore to be worshipped, but it neither can, nor ever did, show how we should serve Him; never any man having known the mind of God, till He was Himself pleased to reveal it. And Porphyry has ingenuously confessed that no philosophy did ever yet find out how the Deity was to be propitiated. As to men's private spirits, which late or former fanatics have trusted to for their direction herein, nothing is more vain, more subject to delusion and mistake. For, though Almighty God did sometimes illuminate certain persons extraordinarily, it was usually accompanied with miraculous attestation as to extraordinary effects, still agreeable to His Holy Word. The Holy Scriptures, therefore, must be, and are, the

only safe and certain guide of our choice in that important affair. It is His Word alone which enlightens us to discover the way to walk in the midst of darkness; and one who seriously, humbly, and with an upright heart, applies himself to that Conductor, and, using the ordinary means to understand their meaning, by the rule we have set down, though he may possibly err in smaller matters, shall never miscarry in the most necessary. For it is altogether inconsistent with the goodness and piety of God, that one should fall into any dangerous mistake, who with those qualifications consults the Sacred Oracle, which imposes nothing of absolute necessity, but great and important doctrines of faith and sanctity, which are all perspicuously described there. Nor does the True Religion consist in any implicit belief, prescription, speculation, pomp, superstition, and gaudy shows, but in plain, easy, and sincere positions and rules, that are agreeable to reason, or, at least, not repugnant to it, though sometimes above it, and supernatural.

The True Religion is what is most ancient; we are therefore led to inquire for the good old way, and to walk therein.[1]

The True and Supernatural Religion, or Faith, delivered from Scripture, acquaints us, and requires us to believe, that the Great and Eternal God, exerting His Almighty power into act, did in time create Matter, (that is, a Chaos) *immediately* and simply, out of nothing pre-existent, by the sole virtue of His omnipotent fiat:

[1] Jer., vi., 16.

and *mediately*, out of that, was educed this aspectable world, or mundane system,—man, and all created beings,—to manifest His divine wisdom, power, goodness, and other attributes, diffused over his Creation, for His own glory,[1] and to the end we might serve and adore Him as our Benefactor and Supreme Good.

That, in a secondary relation, all this seems, in some part or other, and subordinately, to have been so made for the use and benefit of mankind; as food, clothing, refreshment, medicine, defence, and ornament; which, though He could have effected in an instant of time, and as some think did (especially the preparatory Matter, or Chaos, out of which emerged all that was made); yet did He it rather successively in six days, to teach us deliberation in all our rational undertakings. And this, first, by the spirit's incubation: whether meaning the third person in the Sacred Trinity, or any created spirit, spirit of nature, or, as some call it, *mundane spirit*, ordained by God to digest, inspire, and communicate a pregnant activity to the confused mass, we list not seriously to inquire. The earth emerged out of the water, and the obscurity which enwrapped it; and next the light, even before the sun, to show that it sprung not from that planet, or any other natural cause, but that light inaccessible. Secondly, the air, fire, or liquid ether, expanding the immense space, and separating the inferior waters from the superior clouds. Thirdly, the collection of the waters into their several channels, seas, springs, rivers, lakes, that the dry land might afford

[1] Ps., xix. 1.

stability and firmness to what was to grow out of and stand upon its bosom, as trees, plants, and vegetables, for the food and sustenance of both man and beast. On this day, it is reasonably concluded that He also created the glorious angels, those ministering spirits, sent forth to do His messages, and be our guardians.[1] Fourthly, the sun, moon, and stars, by which His glorious works were cherished, made conspicuous and visible. Fifthly, the fishes, fowls, reptiles, and insects furnished the waters and air to feed one another. Sixthly, the large cattle and savage brutes, to replenish the earth. And, lastly, man, to command, use, and govern, dress and cultivate all these, and contemplate and celebrate the works of the Creator, in praise and adoration.

Man, therefore, He especially created (having provided and furnished so plentifully for all his needs) by a more solemn consult of the Holy Trinity; infusing or insufflating (besides the animal and temporary life common with other creatures) a rational soul, capable of immortality, and by which he was qualified to understand, contemplate, and enjoy all the creatures subject to him. And, lastly, out of his rib, whilst in a profound sleep or ecstasy, the woman, Eve, was built, and given to be a companion meet for him, not finding, among all those other living creatures, any of them fitting to converse with him in all this abundance of other things.

Finally, upon the seventh day, that is, when God had desisted from all His operations, creations of various

[1] Coloss., i., 16.

species, He is said to *repose;* that is, to create no more; and to command us to rest from all our servile works and labours, in memory of His stupendous operations, and employ ourselves in contemplating and praising the Universal Maker.[1]

Man being therefore thus created, and, as God's vicegerent, to govern the rest, was placed in a most happy Paradise, under a most agreeable diversion of cultivating only his garden (for God would not have him idle, even in his most pleasant state), and, for acknowledging the Author of his felicity, was promised the long continuance of this happiness, even to a far better, upon an easy and very reasonable injunction of obedience to a slight prohibition, namely, that amidst all the variety and abundance, he should abstain from eating the fruit of a certain tree, under penalty of utterly losing not only the enjoyment of his present state and happiness, but of both his natural life and that of his immortal soul; the consequence whereof would be, the ruin of his whole posterity.

But so it was, that an innumerable host of those glorious and happy spirits, whom God had before created, proudly rebelling in Heaven against the Most Highest, their omnipotent Maker, were precipitated, for this insolence, from those blessed abodes, and now envying the happy condition of mankind, a leader of those wicked spirits transforming himself into

[1] Whether on this day was their more solemn worship or no, is not clear, till Moses' dispensation, but some day of the time they doubtless used for their more public devotion.

the shape of a serpent, or probably into some more lively creature, yet of a subtle and serpentine nature, tempted the man, by his more feeble inclination the woman, and, under a false appearance and suggestion (as if their Maker had forbidden them the eating of a fruit whose property it was to make them gods, and endow them with transcendent qualities like their Creator's), persuaded her to eat of the prohibited fatal tree; and she immediately her too fond husband.

But all these specious effects utterly failing,—the Covenant broken by which they enjoyed all these privileges and blessings,—this foul and ungrateful lapse cost them the loss of God's favour, ejection out of Paradise, and the felicity they enjoyed in that delicious abode. Thus became they obnoxious to death, sickness, and dissolution of body, their understandings weakened and abased in faults, losing withal his sovereignty with the principles of his moral rectitude, and much doubtless of the beauty and vigour of his body, — reparable, in part only, by much study, labour, and anxiety in a toilsome life, — his spiritual and immortal state, irrecoverably also lost, and, but by special grace and mercy, in a second Covenant recovered.

Besides all this, by the corruption and taint of sin, their descendants thereby universally became liable to the same condemnation, and all those evils the whole race of mankind has lain under ever since. For man, as the immediate work of God, must needs have come pure and immaculate out of His sacred hands. But

thus he shamefully fell, not without due warning or ability to have resisted all temptation, endowed, as he was, both with great understanding and liberty of election, which aggravated his fault.

Now, whether the Devil borrowed the painted and curiously-coloured serpent's organs, to insinuate this fatal exploit, or by whatever other means, so it was, that the pravity of their imagination, the effect of this transgression, corrupting the members of their own body, transfused the venom to their posterity, which, like a filthy leprosy, has ever since been lurking; and, becoming hereditary, has been propagated, and broken out in all manner of wickedness, forgetfulness of God, inclination to all evil, and irregular appetites. For the root being thus corrupted, the branches must needs be unsound, and the fruit as bad. The obligation and ingratitude of Adam, that first of men, was so much greater, inasmuch as he was created a person of such singular majesty, beauty, strength, and other abilities, and, next, (of all earthly creatures) in perfection to the Divine Intelligences,—in consummate fruition of all good suitable to his nature and constitution,—and, capable of continuance in his happy state, with power and dominion over all the world, over all his own faculties also, concredited to him by his bounteous Maker. He was, as we said, created with a clear and bright understanding, freedom of will, and, as the rest of God's creatures, perfectly good, but indeed not immutable, as left in the counsel of his own hands; and therefore the more obliged. Nor had the angels any higher perfection

as to liberty and in condition, as Justin Martyr tells us.[1]

The station wherein he was placed was a garden of delight, furnished with all that the eye or ear could wish, with absolute faculty of enjoying, of all this, whatever he pleased, one only tree excepted, for trial and probation of his obedience, dependency, and recognition, for all that infinite variety; and guarded by a severe and most deserved commination. Nor less than this could God have enjoined him, without discharging him entirely of all duty and allegiance whatsoever, and without rendering him wholly independent of his Maker and Benefactor; so as the trivialness of the thing commanded, as it made the law the most easy, so the infraction of it rendered the offence the greater.

There are who have wantonly presumed to think it severe, that for so small a matter man should be made so miserable. But these bold men do not consider the Majesty offended, the presumption and obligation of the creature offending, the command so easy, the disobedience so much greater; and therefore should no more censure the Almighty proceeding, than (as one says) one ignorant in mathematics, a world of things and truths he does not comprehend; but which yet are certain and indubitable. We can no more investigate and trace out these *arcana*, than we can the virtues of the magnet, and things beyond our understanding. And such are also even divers Articles of Faith, the

[1] Αὐτεξουσιον γὰρ καὶ τῶν ἀγγελῶν γένος, καὶ τὸ ἀνθρώπων ὁ Θεὸς ἐποίησεν.

Trinity, Incarnation, and Hypostatical Union—mysteries above our reasoning; but they are real, and such as we shall one day find to have been done, upon account of the greatest wisdom and justice.

This was not so much one single and trite commandment, but the only one remaining of the whole Decalogue, by which the Almighty could have proved their obedience. For as yet there was neither parent, relation, magistrate, nor neighbour to offend against; murder they could not do, but by killing themselves (which, indeed, they sadly did, and all their race too, in the event, but this not through wrath or vengeance.) They could not dishonour earthly parents, for they had none, nor break the Sabbath; for as yet it was not enjoined. Nor could they commit adultery, for there was but one wife and husband in the whole world; nor steal, since there was none to take from; nor bear false witness against a neighbour, who had none; nor, lastly, covet, who wanted nothing, who had already all the world. So that there seemed to remain this only trial of their obedience to express their gratitude and obsequiousness, through all the circle of God's commands; so that, whether out of infidelity, pride, ambition, or compliance with his wife, his fault was without excuse, and to the ruin of both soul and body. The soul, which is the form, and denominates the man, was in this transgression as well as the body; since, through its faculties, the inferior body was brought to yield in the first place.

Thus, all mankind being in the first man, as in the

stock and root, was liable to the same offence; having received that precious *depositum*, his soul, both for himself and all his posterity; and, consequently, what he lost, he also lost for them. The foundation being impure, the stream must needs be polluted, as a prodigal father impoverishes himself and unborn child, as a traitor to his Prince and Sovereign derives the taint to all his blood.

Thus, we have showed how Adam could not have sinned against any injunction in the whole Moral Law, save in this only instance, which was so great as rendered him guilty against both the Tables of it, in its fatal consequences. Whether it were concupiscence that first appeared, (after his tasting the forbidden fruit, of quality to provoke disorderly and immodest motions) or whatever else which they sought to covet, conscious of the guilt; the taint was so contagious as, had not God, of infinite mercy, taken pity, and a Saviour intervened, weakened and abandoned as Adam was, no flesh could have been saved; God's justice must have taken place, and condemned all. For though God, considered in His absolute power, could have pardoned the sin of man at first, yet, considered in that decree He made from all eternity to punish sin, and as a Governor, bound to maintain it, He was not to exercise that power; nor could any creature, angel, or man, reverse that decree, or satisfy Divine Justice. There was, therefore, something of infinitely greater value and qualification required to free man from the punishment of having offended against this Covenant of Works by

entering into a new one, upon new terms and upon renewed obedience, before His justice took place. And, accordingly, Almighty God, in pity to our frailty (and that man was not his own tempter, but falling by a malicious spirit), rescued him from this destruction, by entering into a second treaty, or covenant, not of works, like the first, but of faith and future holiness, in expectation and virtue of a champion;[1] who, proceeding from the woman, should bruise and break the cursed Serpent's head (wherein all his power and venom lay;) triumph over the deadly foe, be a Mediator and Saviour of him and all mankind, and thereby restore them and their obedient race to greater happiness than what they lost.[2]

This seems the method of God's *election;* for, though there be neither *prius* nor *posterius* in God's will, who sees and contemplates all things at once and together, as if already done (as to our weak and infirm capacity, who cannot conceive of actions but by time and succession), and did foreknow to what unhappy period man would come, by abusing his liberty and choice; He provided a sovereign panacea and remedy to restore His collapsed creatures. God did not decree man's fall, or so much as permit it in a strict sense, as allowing or tolerating it (for then it might carry some excuse perhaps), but so permit it only, as the prodigal father in the parable suffered his curious younger son to travel strange countries, and try, as it were, his fortune; the ill employment whereof was none of the father's fault,

[1] Gen. iii., 15. [2] John, iii., 15, 16.

or so much as any part of his will or purpose, much less His irreversible decree. Only it gave the father such an opportunity, as the Fall of Man did the Almighty, of showing mercy on him, and pitying his sad case; yea, and of meeting his returning and repenting child. God returns to man, offers him a Saviour, and a means of restitution, and entering into grace.

In the mean time, it is confessed that, supposing God had not created man in a capacity of attaining supernatural felicity (for man, at first, was only in a state of natural felicity, consisting in the fruition of this life, had he persisted in innocency), he might, notwithstanding, have created him in a state of immortality, though still in Paradise. The Tree of Life, which was also in the same garden, might, probably, have been propagated by both Adam and his posterity, wherever they came; making all the world, in time, a Paradise, where innocent people dwelt. This to preserve them in health and life (not as Josephus thinks, a very long time only), but for ever, even here, or till God should have translated them to a better world.

Nor does this opinion exclude any purpose of calling man to a place of supernatural grace, capacitating him for glory in heaven. And some there are who think that God proposed to exercise him first in this inferior state, and, finding him faithful and obedient on this probation, to have called him to a higher. And that this calling was to be by the Word of God, which, being afterwards incarnate, is our Lord Christ, who should have appeared in the flesh to perform this mercy, though

Adam had not lapsed. This is assigned for a reason why afterwards the Law given to Moses did stipulate only for the happiness of this life alone, though covertly, that those who obeyed that Law should be blessed with a more happy life; God intending to set on foot, in time, a treaty of evangelical righteousness by Christ, on terms of which that happiness should be obtained. And thus, proceeding by degrees, should man have been prepared for the Gospel and coming of Christ by the discipline of the Law; and as if God would hereby try how inveterate and great the disease was by the failing of the cure thereof by the Law, before the Grand Physician, as the Son of God, should come in person to perfect and do the cure.

But, to leave this supposition, for it is no more, and return to where we left. Till this fatal lapse of Adam, there was no faith required for justification but in God alone, His benignity and bounty. Yet faith there must be, seeing, without it, it is impossible to please God.[1] Nor could man love and obey one in whom he did not believe; and, before sin, there was neither needs of a Saviour or faith in Christ. But, after the Fall, man had another object of his faith, namely, the promised deliverance by the seed of the woman; and that God would certainly make good His word.

SECTION II.

OF THE PATRIARCHAL ANTEDILUVIAN RELIGION.

In this general faith Adam's and the antediluvian Patriarchs' penitent and religious posterity passed their

[1] Hebr., xi., 6.

time, without other extraordinary revelation that we read of, though they, doubtless, might have confirmation of it from time to time; such as Enoch, who walked with God, Noah, Melchisedeck, and other holy persons, till Abraham, to whom it was first declared, from whose loins this promise should be made good — in him all the nations of the earth should be blessed. But this was very obscurely discovered as yet, as sometimes by dreams and visions, till the postdiluvian and more prophetic days; and so with greater light and evidence, as the bright day-star of Jacob was approaching and ready to rise. For all the saints and holy men of old had but a general and very misty sight of Christ the Saviour, or, as one may say, of the Christian religion. The difference was, that their faith was of things to come and in expectance; ours of the present, past, and future. Thus was Christ promised to Eve, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob; Moses, David, and all the prophets mentioned him, as we shall come to show in the chapter following.

Now, as to the exterior service, how early sacrifices were, both for Eucharist (before he sinned) and for expatiation afterwards, is apparent by that of Abel's and Cain's.[1] But, during the time of their standing in Paradise,[2] the religion, as is most natural, was eucharistical; was the praising and magnifying their Creator's works. Nor was Adam, doubtless, even after his Fall,

[1] De Civ. Dei, l. 10, c. 4. See St. Chrysost. Hom., 18 in Genes.

[2] Some think it was hardly a full day—at least, a very short time; but some more competent space may well be imagined, had it been but for the contemplation and naming of the creatures.

actually deprived of all his habitual knowledge, though his inclinations and appetites were so perverted that the truth which enlightened his mind took no effect on his actions no more than it still does upon all his posterity, till grace supervene; I say, though his soul was in this disorder, yet could he not so utterly forget the offence he had committed as not to see and bewail his condition, and might be taught that, there being no remission without shedding of blood, God would accept of a sacrifice of his own appointment, as He did that of Abel. But neither did he nor any of the Antediluvian Patriarchs offer any thing, save Holocausts and whole burnt-offerings for expiation; because, as yet, they were not to eat flesh, much less any part of their sacrifice; but feed on fruits and plants, till God gave permission to the sons of Noah, offering peace-offerings, of which part was burnt, and the rest eaten, with praise, festivity, and rejoicing, in token of God's being well pleased; as they did after their coming forth of the ark. The same service we also find continued afterwards by Abraham with invocations, prostration, and prayers, and, as some believe, in a public form; and that the Patriarchs, the school of Methusalem, taught men religion by way of preaching and persuading; not pretending that God spake to them before Moses.[1]

Then, as to the Sabbath—the memory of the creation,

[1] St. Peter says expressly that Noah preached to them whilst he was preparing the ark, which, if during the whole time of its fabric, was no less than a hundred years.

the sanctifying of it, was doubtless before the Mosaic Law; and, being of Divine institution, the seventh day from the creation, positively obliged all mankind, so that the very heathen honoured it.

The Jews, indeed, call this period *the age of emptiness*,[1] even to the promulgation of their Law, there being, as yet, no other than that of Nature—namely, those innate sentiments, and such other principles, as, even at first sight, exact assent. The Church, as yet, and the children of God, had not that only, but some positive laws also. Now, the natural law does not derive its force from any arbitrary power, constitution, or any external revelation, but from the moral and intrinsic virtue of the things themselves. And, yet, even this law is implanted and impressed by God, showing what is good, just, and profitable; what evil, dishonest, intolerable, and inconsistent with natural life and government. And this was the religion which prevailed for nearly 2,000 years, without any more sublime, unless we take in what we mentioned, and what the Jews assert, concerning the seven precepts of the sons of Noah. Six of these they pretend to have been derived from Adam himself and his descendants: namely, first, prohibition against strange worship, explained in the two first of the Decalogue—at least, something like them; secondly, about blessing, or, rather, not blaspheming the tremendous name of God; thirdly, against effusion of innocent blood, which was also renewed after the Flood; fourthly, against adultery and unclean-

[1] M. Ben. Isr. De Resurrect., l. iii., c. 3.

ness; the fifth, forbidding theft; the sixth, concerning judges and magistrates, for the distribution of common justice; and, lastly, the prohibition against eating blood.

All these, holy Job,[1] who lived long ere Moses, does, in some places or other of his book, seem not obscurely to point out, the last only excepted, as forbidding all the cruelties, as human sacrifices and other barbarous rites, which the Heathen practised in their amphitheatres and spectacles; God Almighty having designed and set apart the blood of creatures, (as containing the spirituous part or life of the creature) for an instrument of expiation only, and for a type of what His Son was to shed. The rest of those ordinances being approved by Him, as seeming to be in the very texture and constitution of our nature, so that the Jews themselves (as much addicted to their rites as they were) made no scruple of receiving those moral Heathen as proselytes who observed them, without obliging them to their other ceremonies—no, not to *Circumcision* itself. Nor was more enjoined them at their reception afterwards into the Christian Church, besides baptism.

These seem, as it were, to have been imperial constitutions enjoined from their very first Father,[2] being good and profitable of their own nature, as without which mankind could not live and be safe. But they

[1] Job. i., 6; xxiv., 2, 3, 4; xxxi., 9, 10, 11, &c. See R. B. Maimon., c. 7.

[2] Πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις ὁμοιῶς λυσιτελεστάτοι, καὶ πρὸς καλοαγαθίαν κοινὸν ἁπᾶσι.—Josephus.

had with these, upon extraordinary emergencies, some, though rarely, revelation by visions and dreams, and sometimes God's immediate voice, as that to Noah, Abraham, &c.; and the Covenant of Circumcision, after the Flood, and when God thought to select a more peculiar Church out of the rest of the depraved and more idolatrous world, in order to His great purpose of giving it a Saviour, the promised seed.

It is likewise affirmed, in this ante and postdiluvian religion, they were not to make matrimonial contracts with the impious and more wicked people of the nations; and, as to other matters of religion, men took care to instruct their children and domestics in the fear of God, as we see by the example of Abraham and his household, the father of the family being now both prince and priest, officiating with prayer and sacraments, (for such was Circumcision) with invocations and sacrifices. And that this was early, we have mentioned in that of Abel, &c. To these add external adoration and worship[1] of bowing the body, prostrations, &c.

As for oblations, Cain and Abel brought their firstlings as a dedicated present due to God, and they were, as we said, eucharistical and expiatory, naturally the *primitiæ* and product of His blessing on their honest labour, as they would have done in Paradise, for what they received without it. Till sin exposing them to the wrath of God, by the blood and death of some innocent creature, they acknowledged the position due to the offender, in whose stead it was offered and accepted.

[1] Gen., xviii., 2.

And this is more than probably, from some positive early institution, enjoined to Adam himself, whom, now sadly degenerated to animal life, we find, a little after the Fall, to be clad in skins of beasts, such as likely had been sacrificed; the flesh (as we have shown) was not then permitted to be eaten. They killed them, therefore, at first for these sacrifices only; the sign of their acceptance being fire from heaven descending to consume it. For doubt I but they had likewise places devoted and consecrated, or set apart for the more solemn service of God. For they had altars[1] in groves, high places, and silent recesses, separate from vulgar resorts, as more fitted to fix and compose their thoughts, though afterwards abased to idolatry and superstition, as by the ancient Druids, and others. And they had seasons more especially appointed for their sacred offices, which some think was on the Sabbath, though it be not so clearly made out, from any positive text, till the Mosaic Dispensation. However, doubtless, the place at Bethel, where Jacob anointed the column, and had his vision, and where Abraham before him more often sacrificed, as at Beersheba,[2] &c., might have been such places as were not afterwards profaned to common uses.

As to the person daily administering and directing the devotion, it was (as we said) the first-born, in whom the priesthood was invested from the beginning; and so, the eldest of the family or tribe, descending on him by right of inheritance. The rest derived from this

[1] Gen., viii., 20; xii., 7, 8; xiii., 4, 18. [2] Gen., xxi., 33.

first or high-priest, as families increased and were constrained to separate, and enlarge their dwellings. And so, even a younger son, either marrying or being separated into a family of his own, became also priest, as well as his elder brother; and so any child, though his grandfather was living, as it is apparent Shem, the patriarch, was even in the time of Abraham; and Abraham, though a younger brother, was priest in his family; and so, even Esau, till he sold his birthright, that is, as some think, his priesthood, and those garments Rebecca put on Jacob, his sacerdotal vestment; but it was still the primogenital right, till a family separated.

Thus we read of holy Job's offering sacrifices both for his children and relations, upon their feasting; and so it continued till the Levitical sacerdocy was fixed and confined to Aaron and his posterity. It was such an honour as made Jacob so desirous of the blessing which his elder brother Esau sold, and lost his right by despising it, as Reuben did afterwards, for his bold incest.[1]

In this religion and observance lived those Fathers both before and after the universal Cataclysm. From Adam it came to Seth, who is said to have been the inventor of letters, astronomy, and other useful arts, and (as is probable) separated his family from the wicked posterity and race of Cain. This was propagated to Enoch, in whose line religion was so public and famous, that his descendants were called, by way

[1] Gen., xlix., 3.

of eminence, *the Sons of God*, to distinguish them from the rest, (now multiplied and exceedingly profane) till, matching with their daughters[1]—a thing it seems prohibited, because these were idolaters, and conversing amongst them—they at length became also so degenerate, as moved God utterly to destroy all mankind from off the face of the earth, by an universal flood of waters.

Long was it yet that His patience waited for their reformation. For Cainan, Mahaleel, Jared, &c., in whose line the (until now) holy posterity, mingling with the vicious and profane Cainites, corrupted with their sensuality, there sprang up a race of giants, or men of extraordinary stature, insolent and cruel tyrants. Some few yet there were who forsook not the True God, among whom was holy Enoch, translated to a better world,[2] to show there was a reward for the righteous, and another state after this life. Methusalah, his son, the longest liver of mortal men, died not till the fatal year was come, which brought the Deluge on all flesh that had corrupted its way. This happened under his grandchild, Noah, the only righteous person then remaining in all the earth; so universally was the whole world depraved. He, finding grace and favour with God, was, with his three sons, his, and their wives, saved by the Ark (a figure of the Church.) This, having been preparing no less than 120 years before, gave time for repentance, which the holy architect of it ceased not to preach unto them, nor they to disregard

[1] Gen., vi., 3, 4.

[2] Gen., v., 24; Heb., xi., 8.

it, till on a sudden a dismal flood came and swept them all away.

SECTION III.

OF THE POSTDILUVIAN RELIGION, TILL THE MOSAIC LAW.

Noah and his family, which was all the visible Church now left in the whole world, was alone saved from destruction. A full year they continued in the floating vessel, when, being called forth by their merciful Preserver, the waters abated; and the earth now dry,[1] they erected an altar, worshipped and invoked God; by praises, prayer, and sacrifices appeasing His displeasure; so that He promises never more to destroy the world in that sort, but that revived nature should resume her wonted course, and proceed in her annual revolutions, as before. It was now also that Almighty God renewed to man his former title of sovereignty and dominion over the creatures, (the species of all animals belonging to the earth and air having been preserved in the Ark during the Flood) promulgating laws against murder, homicide, and cruelty, by which mankind had so lately incensed Him.

Of this holy patriarch's posterity were Shem, Ham, and Japhet, in whom their father (sensible of their reverence to him when overtaken with wine, the force whereof he had not before proved) predicted the vocation of the Gentiles, and consequently of the Messiah. These two sons, piously educated both by their father,

[1] Concerning the alteration of the earth by the Flood, see Dr. Burnet's *Theory*.

great-grandfather, grandfather, Lamech and Methusalah, who for many hundred of years conversed with Adam, had the less need of *written* laws or books to direct them, oral tradition being so freshly conveyed to them from the fountain. From hence the Church went on to Heber, in whose days (though himself a gracious person) idolatry began to spread exceedingly, propagated by their erecting images of their ancestors, through which the devil used to give responses.

From this, Heber was the original of the Jewish nation; Peleg succeeding him, a numerous rabble of profane men, who, combining under the conduct of the tyrant Nimrod, began to erect a tower of enormous height, thinking thereby to brave any future deluge or destruction by fire or water, making it also a citadel to protect their rapines and oppressions; till God, incensed at their foolish and bold attempt, so confounded their speech as, not being able any longer to understand each other, they were forced to desist from working, and, separating into several bands, became as many colonies.

Thus, roaming about those eastern countries, they peopled divers places, according as they happened to understand one another's jargon and confounded speech; for, till this judgment, all mankind were of one lip, Hebrew being the universal language. From some of these sprang the predecessor of the patriarch Abraham, whose parents, though of holy race, conversing with these idolaters, he was himself also tainted. Upon this, his second son, succeeding in the patriarchal line, namely, Abraham having been extraordinarily called by

God, left his father's house and idols, that he might entirely devote himself to His worship and service. And this he did to that height of affection and confidence in God, as readily and cheerfully to make him an immolation of that his only son, so miraculously born to him in his old age, and in whom both himself and all the world had the promise of the greatest blessing that could ever be bestowed. This generous action, and as miraculous a faith and hope, so pleased the Almighty, that, though He accepted the will for the deed, as he did also his abandoning his friends, country, estate, and all other secular interests, and his readily submitting, and that at his great age, to the painful covenant of Circumcision, (which God required as a federal character of distinction from the Heathen world[1]) that He not only prospered him in his person with health, riches, and all earthly felicity, but gave him richer promises of possessions to his seed and posterity for ever.

Thus in Abraham's family was virtue and religion professed, and with him the Covenant again renewed. He it was who so carefully trained his domestics in the true faith, and propagated it to his posterity.[2] So gracious was this holy and hospitable man with God, as frequently conversing with his Divine Majesty, he was honoured with the glorious title of the *Friend of God;* blessed with His promised protection, and that he should be the father of many princes and nations, and of a numerous progeny. This, the Divine promise, was

[1] Gen., xvii., 10. [2] Gen., xviii., 19.

confirmed by solemn oath, and ratified by that federal sacrament of Circumcision, by which his descendants became God's peculiar people.

Neither yet did Almighty God altogether abandon the rest of mankind, some among the Heathen, Job and his friends and children, especially Melchisedech, who was both a king and priest, and had doubtless holy and peaceable subjects under him. Some there are who think him Shem, who lived seventy years after the Patriarch's coming into Canaan. This is yet but conjecture. Whoever therefore this great person was, he was certainly a type (even amidst those nations) of the clerical and royal pristhood of Him who was both King, Priest, and Prophet,[1] the Lord Christ; and therefore neither his original nor end so much as mentioned, though it was superior to any of the Levitical priests succeeding him.

But to return to Abraham. The true worship of God, transferred from him to his religious son Isaac and grandson Jacob, descended to the twelve patriarchs. After the descent of Jacob and his sons into Egypt, called thither by Joseph, and living there in great prosperity till cruelly oppressed by another prince, who knew not that great favourite, (to show they were not to set up all their rest in this life only, nor yet that God was unmindful of His promise) they were after 420 long years of cruel servitude miraculously delivered, and brought into the land of Canaan. There, having extirpated, by the miraculous assistance of God, seven

[1] Heb., vii.

wicked and abominable nations, they flourished under a theocracy, governed by God Himself alone, not so much in form of a republic as a monarchy under his Vicegerent Moses, who was king in Jeshurun, and that by a code of positive laws and written ordinances. For the lives of men since the Flood being exceedingly abbreviated, it became now absolutely necessary that the saving knowledge of God should no longer be trusted to the tradition of short-lived people, but written and recorded in sacred books.

In this manner was primitive religion propagated among the holy race, and among some extraordinary persons in the Heathen world. We instanced the pious Job and friends; and doubtless more there were, examples of justice, temperance, charity, and the most signal patience that ever was, our Blessed Saviour only excepted. For, till now, was religion and the worship of God sincere, pure, simple, natural, and most agreeable to the notions and sentiments of honest minds, right and well consulted reason, as without which the world could not have subsisted. That this, therefore, might be kept up, and now no longer be obnoxious to those hitherto ambulatory interruptions of unsettled abodes, it pleased Almighty God to fix His Church, and select people, under a more steady dispensation of peculiar and positive laws and rites; of which in the Chapter following.

CHAPTER IX.

OF THE JEWISH MOSAICAL LAW, RITUAL, AND TYPICAL RELIGION.

SECTION I. OF SACRIFICES AND HOLY SEASONS.
SECTION II. OF THE PRIESTLY FAMILY AND FUNCTIONS.
SECTION III. OF THE JEWISH SECTS.
SECTION IV. OF THE JEWISH DISCIPLINE AND ITS AUSTERITY.
SECTION V. OF THE TYPICAL CHARACTER OF THE JEWISH RELIGION.

SECTION I. OF SACRIFICES AND HOLY SEASONS.

The Church of God, being now become, from a private family, as it were, to a great and numerous nation, delivered from Egyptian slavery by a mighty Hand, from their oppression, and disciplined, by a tedious passage in the Wilderness, to the Land of Promise, where they were to settle, till the full accomplishment of the great promise of the Messiah, and to supply the now abbreviated lives of men subject to be corrupted by tradition, and running into superstition, Almighty God thought fit to give them written laws and ordinances, by which they were to govern themselves, and obey

those whom He should appoint over them. And this He did under the Mosaic Dispensation first, and then by preaching and ministry of Priests and Prophets, in nothing repugnant to, but asserting the laws of nature, which are eternal.

This He did, in tremendous circumstances, on Mount Sinai, promulgated by the voice of the Eternal God in the audience of the whole nation, namely, the Decalogue, or Moral Law, miraculously engraven on tablets of stone by their Divine Legislator. The rest (containing the Ritual, Ceremonial, Typical, Ecclesiastical, Municipal, Political), was that part of the worship and government delivered to Moses only, and by him recorded in writing. And this Digest, or Summary of their Moral Statute Law, contained the whole duty of man, as far as concerned the present capacity of that people; calculated (I say) to the state of things, in order to a future and more perfect and consummate.

There was nothing among these precepts but what seemed to be of absolute necessity, as to the moral part, for the universal benefit of mankind; that of the Sabbath only superadded, which, whether typical and ceremonial only, was necessary for the setting of some particular part of time for God's more solemn worship. Indeed, the observance of the seventh day had a peculiar respect to the Israelites, as a sign of the Covenants made with them, when they were delivered from the Egyptian bondage; since, in its own nature, it carried no obligation by any light of nature at least, as the other Commandments do, deduced from the reason of

the things. Justin Martyr[1] thinks that it enjoined the Jews especially, and with that strictness, as being a people naturally too worldly and intent upon gain, and consequently too severe to poor servants, cattle, &c.; being, as they were, a perverse nation, impatient of God's service, which would else have wholly been in danger of being neglected.[2] Nor was yet either this, or any other ceremonial, altogether external, without analogy and relation to something more internal and spiritual; such as circumcision enjoined to Abraham, which signified mortification of concupiscence; the Sabbath under Moses, for the contemplation and worship of the Creator. Neither of these were *ab initio;* for, according to Irenæus, "Abraham believed God without circumcision, and observance of the Sabbath." And therefore had it a peculiar regard to the Jews, and was of high value, as it was said to weigh against all the other Commandments. But it had also a further prospect, St. Augustine tells us. *Inter omnia dicem præcepta, solum ibi quod de Sabbato positum est, figuratè observandum præcipitur:*[3] as well as the rest of those Feasts in the Levitical Code. And this appears by their being absolutely abrogated by our Saviour.[4] All days are esteemed alike to Christians,[5] as grounded on a Law Divine, and therefore not at all affecting that Christian liberty. And, as it had no injunction till

[1] Dial. contr. Tryph.
[2] Isai., lviii., 3, 13.
[3] S. Aug., Ep. 119.
[4] Coloss., ii., 16, 17.
[5] Rom., xiv., 5.

Moses,[1] so after Christ it had as little, that is, no farther than, as it was thought, a fit occasion of reminding us of spiritual duties, of mercy and relaxation to those employed by us, and for religious meditation on the Works of God; but especially for our deliverance and redemption from the slavery of our sins and Satan, and, in a manner, our re-creation. These required some variation from secular business and distractions; that also those under our charge may have leisure to do the like; and for the works of charity to our servants, and mercy even to our very beasts.

Now, though there was no public office, that we read of, enjoined for public prayer and exhortation on the Jewish Sabbath, yet the very reason of the thing naturally led them to it, and accordingly they practised both in their Synagogue; nor were they ever reproved, but commended for it: which may be a document of our obedience to the reasonable injunction of our superiors in the like cases, and especially as to solemn times, places, and offices, as they who are set over us think necessary; not repugnant to, but highly advancing the worship and honour of God.

Proceed we next to Sacrifices, which, being very bloody, were ordained for the punishment and expiation of sin. And these had all their accomplishment in the sacrifice of Christ upon the bloody cross, as symbols and shadows of better things to come. These were holocausts, burnt-offerings, and trespass-offerings,

[1] Ἀπὸ Ἀβραὰμ ἤρξατο περιτομὴ, καὶ ἀπὸ Μωσέως Σάββατον. Justin Martyr.

for the expiation of the most heinous crimes; the rest for frailties, for peace and reconciliation, for mercies and benefits received, which were accordingly accompanied with prayers and praises; and these latter were of things inanimate, as fruits and products of the earth.

As to the other great Sacrament,[1] the *Passover*, it was to be a lamb without blemish, in annual memory, likewise, of their deliverance from Egypt, and more particularly God's remarkable sparing of their nation, when He smote the first-born there of their tyrants and subjects. It typified the benefit both which they were to receive by the passion of the Lamb of God, without spot, to be offered for all mankind; abolishing all the sacrifices of the law, which, without *this*, never could have freed us from the captivity and tyranny under sin and Satan.

The Jews, till fully possessed and settled in Canaan, from the pattern delivered to Moses in the Mount, had a Tabernacle, or ambulatory Temple; agreeable in all its divisions and furniture with that glorious structure of Solomon, in which, as a designed place, and on certain days, they were to worship God in public. In this was the *Sanctum Sanctorum*, or an interior, awful, and glorious closet, typifying Heaven itself. And in this was the Ark of the Covenant, as representing the Mediator of it. In this precious cabinet were kept the Tables of the Decalogue, written by the finger of God; the pot of manna, signifying the True Bread, which comes down from Heaven for the food of the Faithful,

[1] Of Circumcision we have already spoken.

till their entry into Heaven, the heavenly true Canaan and Land of Promise; the rod of Aaron, which budded, and figured the branch, which in the Messiah was to spring from the root of Jesse.[1] This Repository was covered with a Propitiatory, or Mercy-seat, shadowed with the wings of cherubim, regarding each other as importing the extraordinary care, power, and presence of God. From hence proceeded the Divine Oracles; the hovering angels prefiguring our Blessed Saviour's mediation. In this place did the High Priest alone enter, and that but once a year, with an extraordinary train of pomp and ceremonies, with the blood of sprinkling, and making atonement within the veil, as well to present the people's prayer on earth as to represent the intercession of Christ in Heaven, where He was first to enter, and is now making intercession for us. Next was the Sanctuary, or Holy Place,[2] furnished with the Table of Shew-bread, which was always to be fresh and daily renewed, figuring the Bread of Life and Word of God.

There was, likewise, the Golden Candlestick, with its seven branches, snuffers, and other instruments, representing Christ, the Light of the World, and his Seven Spirits of God.[3] And here was the Censer,

[1] Heb., ix., 4, &c.

[2] Note, that this furniture of the most Holy Place, together with the miraculously kindled fire always burning on the Great Altar, were wanting in the Second Temple, at least, at the death of Malachi, after whom no Prophet wrote, till the coming of Christ.

[3] Rev., iv., 5.

typifying also the merits and intercession of our Lord. On the Golden Altar were burnt incense and perfumes, morning and evening, showing Christ to be the True Altar,[1] who sanctifies all our devotions, and renders them acceptable. Into this part of the Tabernacle did the inferior priests enter, to perform the daily ministry, in trimming the lights, furnishing the table, &c.

A third enclosure of this noble tent was, with the Court before it, the place where the people came to offer their sacrifices and devotions. That of the daily unintermitted service was the oblation of the Lamb, morning and evening. This was called the continual burnt-offering, with flour, oil, and wine, which the revenues of the Temple maintained.

Here, also, on the Great Brazen Altar, on which the Sacred Fire was kindled from Heaven, and was always kept burning, denoting continual zeal, were consumed the holocausts, or sin-offerings, as likewise those of trespass. Also, the meat-offering of things inanimate and without life, as the fruits of the earth, &c. Peace-offerings, upon vows and the like occasions, in which the fat only being God's part, the rest was for the priest. Lastly, the Eucharistical, for praise and thanksgiving, which, being a free-will offering, might be a living creature, or productions of the earth. To mention only those other Oblations of Tenths, first-fruits and first-born, and for ceremonial impurities. For we have already spoken of the Paschal Lamb, which was to be an unblemished male, with whose

[1] Psal. cxli., 2.

blood the lintels of the door were sprinkled, as figuring the blood of the Lamb, which protects us from destruction. This lamb was bound, its throat cut, and then roasted whole, as foreshowing the barbarous usage and cruel pains our Saviour endured for us. None but those who were clean and were in covenant of circumcision, might eat. The salad was of bitter herbs, and with unleavened bread, intimating the purity and holiness of those who were to have benefit by Christ, and were prepared by repentance, and faithful resolution to go through all difficulty in his service, without the leaven of pride, malice, and hypocrisy; lastly,[1] with their loins girt, staves in their hands, and in a travelling posture, as ready to follow our Saviour and Deliverer. So that there was not a tittle of the whole ceremonial law, but which (though for a time to them veiled under ritual clouds) had relation to something solid, which was afterwards revealed in substance, as having relation to the mystery of the Gospel, when all these figures and objections vanished.

To the outward court Solomon afterwards added a very large one for the proselyte Gentiles, who, believing in their gods, observing the precepts of the sons of Noah, came to worship; prefiguring the universal call of nations, who should one day be admitted among the true Israelites. Here was also the place where the Jews, who were accidentally polluted, might presume to come, till they were legally cleansed.

[1] I. Cor., v., 7, 8.

It is, therefore, to be noted, that before the other court were placed the lavers, wherein the priests and people also washed their hands and feet before they ministered, and went to offer, according to that of David:[1] "I will wash my hands in innocency, and so will I compass thine altar." There were, likewise, in this court the corban and treasure.

Besides the Sabbaths (as we noted), they had several stated times, both annual and periodical, for more solemn services; for they had also their monthly at every moon, welcomed by sound of trumpets, in token of joy and thanks for their monthly blessings. The ordinary annual was the Paschal, on the fourteenth of March, or first month. Then that of weeks, or Pentecost, fifty days after the other, in memory of the Law given at Mount Sinai; and Eucharistical, for the harvest, about this season.

The third was that of *Tabernacles*, on the fifteenth of September, which lasted a week, in which they feasted and rejoiced under fresh and verdant arbours, calling to mind their sojourning in tents in their passage out of Egypt; and typifying the transitory and fading pilgrimage of our lives in these earthly tabernacles in our passage to the heavenly country.

On these three great solemnities were all the males obliged to appear at Jerusalem, the capital city, where was the Temple. Nor came they empty to do their homage to God, who dwelt there by His more special presence. The greater holy periods were the Sabbatical years, during which their land lay uncultivated;

[1] Psal. xxvi., 6.

not only that they might depend on God's Providence for their sustenance, but to typify the eternal Sabbath, more especially prefigured in the year of Jubilee, every fiftieth year. For at this period, all servants, debts, and mortgages being discharged, they reverted to their owners; shadowing out the state of the Gospel, when Christ was sent to preach good tidings to the meek, bind up the broken-hearted, preach liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prisons to them that were bound; in a word, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, &c.[1]

SECTION II.

OF THE PRIESTLY FAMILY AND FUNCTIONS.

The functions of the Holy Place were performed by consecrated persons of a particular tribe and family; amongst whom the High Priest, typifying Christ, was to offer for the people, as our Saviour, for the whole world; of which, at that time, they bare the figure. The business of the inferior orders (and whose garments and consecration differed much from the glorious High Priest's) was to pray and offer sacrifice, instruct and bless the congregation; to judge in cases of leprosy and other impurities. They themselves in ordination being chosen before the people, were washed, sprinkled, shaven, anointed, and initiated with sacrifice, and were afterwards paid tithes for maintenance.

Subordinate to these were the Levites, who assisted the Priests about the sacrifices, cleansing and ranging

[1] Isaia., lxi., 1, 2; Luke, iv., 16-19.

the several utensils; they took care of the several courts and apartments of the Temple, kept the watches by turns, sang hymns with musical instruments, &c.; thus, serving from the age of thirty to their fiftieth year, they were after that dispensed with and rewarded. Great and many were the qualifications of a High Priest above the Levites; for, as he was to be of the lineage of Aaron, so was he to be of a most comely entire person, as typifying that of Christ, in whom was no defect. It was the High Priest alone, who, upon all great emergencies, consulted the Holy Oracles, the Urim and Thummim.[1] What the first was is not easy to determine, some conjecturing it to have been a conspicuous shining or coruscation of so many letters (in the Pectoral, which the High Priest wore) one after another, which, being put together, composed the response of the inquiry; and that the universal belief of this continued till the destruction of the first Temple, is a very great evidence of that miracle to be true; others, that upon the putting on of this breast-plate, the holy man became inspired; others, again, that it was a small *Teraphim*, carved like a little genius of human form, inserted in some notch of the Pectoral, which, through the ministry of an angel, spake and gave answers. This is the opinion of many grave and learned divines, as the most probable, but of no sound proof, especially as to its puppet form; from the so universally prevailing manner of the Gentiles placing little images in their shrines and temples, whence they had oracular voices;

[1] Exod., xxviii., 30; Numb., xxvii., 21.

and, perhaps, to wean them from the Heathen impure rights, it might please God to indulge them with this *Teraphim*, as it was of so frequent use among other nations. For so that people, by God's permission, and to comply with their infant weakness, as it were, did sanctify and adopt divers of the Gentile rites to His service for a time; as did afterwards the Christians also; several ceremonies of theirs remaining, though reformed, to our times. Thus, Maimonides acknowledges that God, abolishing the cult of Gentile idols, reduced it to His own service, of which see amply in our learned Spencer.[1]

But these extraordinary concessions, like that of circumcision, remaining some time after our blessed Saviour's Incarnation, lasted no longer than to the first Temple and the captivity. All which, together with the spirit of prophecy, and several excellent and rare privileges, expired by degrees, as they provoked God, and grew dissolute and unmindful of Him and His messengers, the Prophets, even to the Advent of Christ, in whom the true Prophetic spirit was revived, and given without measure, as we shall show in the following chapter.

In the mean time, it is by the Jews themselves confessed that, forty years before their Temple was destroyed, the scarlet ribbon, tied on the goats, grew no more white; which change was a sign of God's acceptance; the evening lamp was extinguished, though full

[1] [Dr. John Spencer, a very ingenious and learned divine and critic, born 1630; died 1695. His greatest and most famous work is "De Legibus Hebræorum Ritualibus et earum rationibus."]

of oil; and the gates of their Temple opened spontaneously; and what happened to the Partition-wall is recorded, when their sacrifices also began to fail.

But to proceed a little farther with their constitutions. Sundry and most burdensome were the laws about meats and drinks, clean and unclean animals, their apparel, trial of jealousy concerning wives and husbands, slaves, servants, masters, contracts, possessions, magistrates, punishments, witches, impostors, blasphemy, perjury, murder, manslaughter, most of them judicial and political, calculated for that people and country, and therefore determinable with them.

We might add as to places of worship; their Synagogues, or parochial meeting-places, as it were, as also schools and colleges in their several cities. In the Synagogues, the Priests and Levites preached to, and taught the people. In the schools, the Doctors and Masters read their lecture, as in Universities. These seem to have been first erected and instituted by Samuel, and in these was Elisha president, as before him his tutor Elias.[1] Their pupils were called sons of the Prophets. Those who were extraordinarily called to be Prophets, were so upon very extraordinary occasions; as was Amos, the son of a herdsman.

Now, the office of the Prophets was, not only to reclaim the people from idolatry, but (as we said) to instruct them; wherein consisted that civil and outward observation of the laws, which promised a temporal reward, as the spiritual and inward obedience to God, which

[1] II. Kings, vi., 1.

might have given them a title to the happiness of the world to come. In this respect, some of the later Prophets were preparatory of the Evangelical doctrine, knowing the great consent and harmony between the two Covenants of the Law and of the Gospel. Indeed, they had but very misty as well as mystical notions of the other life, under the Mosaical dispensation, till Christ.[1] The Elders and superior Judges of Israel, Prophets, and Teachers of several ages, of whom we read,[2] being acquainted with the mystery, were yet to acquaint the people but sparingly and by degrees, as God, in His secret wisdom, appointed. For by the Law and Covenant between God and Israel, by the mediation of Moses, was the Land of Promise given them, on condition of embracing those ordinances. Yet that the life to come was a reward also to those who obeyed the Law, is manifest by that of our Blessed Saviour.[3] "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments," namely, the Moral Law, as containing all the duties of Christianity; for, doubtless, the immortality of the soul and retributions after death were not altogether hidden from them, even before the very Law was promulged. How should otherwise the holy Patriarchs be saved? It being evident by Scripture that the same conversation, which was preached by Christ and His Apostles, was extant and conspicuous in their lives and conversations before the Law of Moses. So were the Fathers of the Church wont to convince the Jews that, even

[1] II. Cor., iii., 13, 14, 15. [2] Heb., xl. [3] Matt., xix., 17.

amongst *them*, Christianity was more ancient than Judaism.[1]

Christ came to make a new Covenant, and to show that He was the consummation of the old, and all its types. In a word, why should all these excellent persons, enumerated by the author of the Hebrews, have suffered such things, if they had promises of this life's enjoyments only, which was to end with the lives they should fling away? Daniel, and Job, and Isaiah, and Ezekiel, show their confidence of a Resurrection;[2] and David's seeing the unrighteous in such affluence and prosperity in this life, argues a better and more happy life to come;[3] though these were secrets, and applied, for the most part, to their being delivered out of worldly calamities. The better and clearer hope of the world to come was reserved for the coming of Christ. And, accordingly, Moses's Tabernacle was, therefore, called a worldly sanctuary only, as a copy of that to be erected and revealed in the fulness of time.[4]

But to proceed. In this state continued the Jewish typical religion, from Moses to David and Solomon (when it was in its height of purity and prosperity), the most splendid type of both the king and kingdom of peace; till Solomon, in his latter days, and afterwards his posterity, defecting, and stopping their ears at the

[1] See Eusebius, De Demonstrat. Evang., l. i.

[2] Dan., xii., 2; Job, xix., 25; Isai., xxvi., 19; Ezek., xxxiii.

[3] Psalm lxxiii.

[4] See in Hebrews, viii., how all this is shown to typify Christ, the Gospel dispensation, and the celestial Canaan.

message God frequently sent them by His Prophets to reform them, He was at last provoked to deliver, first, the Ten Tribes to captivity, who never returned more, and after them, the incorrigible two remaining. These, after the demolition of their glorious Temple and Holy City, (typifying the body of Christ, which should be destroyed, rise, and be re-built again) were restored after a captivity of seventy years, interpreted by Daniel seventy weeks, to signify 490 years, at which period was prophesied the advent of the expected Messiah, which should put an end to the Levitical and Mosaic rites, and introduce a law of everlasting righteousness, and restore the true freedom of the whole world from the Satanical captivity, as it exactly fell out. Observable here was the conduct of Alexander the Great to Jaddeus, the High Priest; and that one of the Ptolemies, after his conquest over Syria, should sacrifice at Jerusalem, and acknowledge that God, when, as yet, the Jews remained in captivity; and that Augustus should send annual oblations; so that it wore out all the religions in the world, save the Christian only.

At the return of the first captivity from Babylon was erected, as we said, the second temple, in this more glorious than the first, not indeed as to outward pomp and show, or costly materials, but inward sanctity, splendour, and glory, inasmuch as the Lord of Glory Himself vouchsafed His presence in it, according as was predicted. But when, after this honour done to the Jewish nation and temple, they corrupted themselves more than their forefathers, profaning the holy

place, and grown exceedingly dissolute, full of pride, covetousness, and all manner of vice and hypocrisy, and the high priesthood interrupted, their liberties were first invaded, the whole government was subverted, first by Antiochus Epiphanes, then by Pompey, Crassus, and others, the first of these tyrants having cruelly persecuted and outraged the nation, thrust out Onias, the high-priest, substituting his impious brother Jason, when Matthias, a priest of the Asmonean family, stood up to vindicate his country with all his sons, the brave Judas Maccabæus and the rest. Till subsequently the subtle Herod, flattering Augustus and bribing the Roman Senate, obtained the sovereignty of those countries, wholly abrogating the Asmonean family, and promoting to the office strangers for seven or eight successors unto Joager, under whose pontificate was born the only true high-priest of our profession, the LORD JESUS. Seventy years after this, the nation and people still waxing worse and worse, the wrath of God, not forgetting the sins and provocations of their wicked ancestors, who murdered Zacharias the son of Jehoiada, and conspired against Jeremiah, persecuted Micaiah, Elias, and others,[1] was poured forth on them to the utmost.

Herod indeed, to ingratiate himself with the people, pulling quite down the decayed old fabric, built a sumptuous pile at great charge; but withal, to flatter his patrons, he set up a vast eagle of gold (the ensign of the Romans) over the principal entrance of that

[1] Luke, xiii., 34.

holy place, expressly against the law, which prohibited all sorts of images. And so he maintained it, till, being on his death-bed, the tumultuous people pulled it down. And now this sacred enclosure was turned into an exchange full of shops of bankers and usurers, and profaned into a den of thieves; rites of mere human invention were substituted in place of the Divine worship; the priesthood was sold to strange, ignorant, and vicious men, all things degenerating into corruption of manner, doctrine, tyranny, and parties.

SECTION III. OF THE JEWISH SECTS.

The Scribes and Pharisees, Essenes, Herodians, Zealots, and other sects and enthusiasts, had put false glosses on the law, teaching the people that it required only formal and external righteousness, palliating all manner of crimes, oppression, malice, disobedience to parents, adultery of the heart, and speculative lusts, rigorous and revengeful retaliation of injuries, abuse of oaths, furious passions, under pretence of zeal, and the like.

They preferred oral tradition (as we know who have done since among Christians) before the written Word. This they pretend to have been delivered to Moses in the Mount, as explanatory of the Decalogue, and transmitted from father to son, by word of mouth, for many generations, to the priests, prophets, people, even to the Great Synagogue; and from them till after their destruction and excision, and a long while after, when, about the reign of Antoninus, they were collected and

committed to writing, for the use of the dispersed, by Rabbi Jeruda, in his *Mishnaioth*, or Book of *Repetitions*. This again was commented on by the Rabbins of Babylon, with innumerable cases and controversies, with a word of truth added, and the resolutions compiled in the *Gemarah*, a work comprehending the whole body of the Babylonish Talmud, which they extol even to blasphemy, and affirm the study of it to be more necessary than Scripture itself, which they extremely vilify, in comparison of the *Mishna* and their doctors' expositions. How this corruption was improved in our Blessed Saviour's time, we are told by St. Matthew and St. Mark,[1] in whose time all God's worship was turned into external and hypocritical forms of godliness, boastings, and outward cleansings, whilst they were, within, full of all manner of wickedness. Scrupulously nice were they of little things, and lightly passed by the greater duties. So a child pretending he had devoted his estate to some holy use, might be excused, though his parents starved for want of relief; the *Corban* vow, or, as it was named, vow of Interdict, whether they performed it or not, was enough to justify them (as they held) from doing their duty to parents, or neighbours the least kindness.[2]

1. THE PHARISEES.

These and the like were the doctrines and supra-additions of the Scribes and Pharisees,[3] or, as this name imports, the Separatists (a sect springing up about the

[1] Matt., xv., 7; Mark, vii., 2, 3, 7. [2] Mark, vii., 11.
[3] See Joseph. Antiq. Jud., l. xviii. De Bello Jud., l. ii.

time of the Maccabees). The latter, for their seeming zeal and strictness, obtained a wonderful veneration amongst the ignorant, while there was not upon the whole earth a more haughty, oppressive, malicious, seditious, sour, peevish, and unmerciful sort of men, yet pretendingly zealous of the traditions of the Fathers. And though they held both spirits and the immortality of the soul, or rather the transmigration of the pious, the rest they condemned to subterranean caverns; and that all were under a fatal necessity, yet had liberty of will.

2. THE SADDUCEES.

Opposite to these was the other sect, the *Sadducees*, who held neither spirits nor angels, nor survivance of the soul—a sect appearing almost 300 years before our Lord's Nativity; a dissolute sort of men agreeably to their principles, which yet from their first institutor, one Antigonus, are reported to have been very good. They held that God was to be served by us, His creatures, ingenuously, and for His own perfection's sake, though there were neither future reward nor punishment. This last part being mis-stated by two of His choice disciples, as if there was nothing after this life, was the original of all those false and sensual consequences which followed, without dependence upon any Divine Providence. For, with the Epicureans, they believed the actions of men to be below the inspection of the Almighty, that He took no notice of this inferior world. In sum, they were a sort of Atheists, though very formal, and pretending to much

justice, keeping themselves to the letter of the law, rejecting traditions, and so far not to be blamed, had all things else been answerable. There were not such swarms as these as of the other, it being for the most part spread among the gentlemen, courtiers, and great persons of the nation, as giving most liberty to looseness and pleasure, which made them fond of peace and quiet, that they might enjoy the world.

3. THE KARAANS.

There was yet a more moderate sect of these, called the *Karaans*, who rejected all their extravagant fancies and errors, adhering to Scripture, as the rule, and rejecting all the glosses of the Talmudists, so as not so much as to admit the points to the Hebrew Bible, as counting them parts of oral traditions. And this sect is frequent in the Levant to this day.

4. ESSENES.

About the same period sprang up another more philosophic sect, that of the *Essenes*, who, being driven into deserts and solitary places, about the persecution under Antiochus, ever after affected those recesses, casting themselves into societies, and leading contemplative lives in celibacy, of ascetic diet, living on the culture of herbs and fruits in common.[1] They revered the Temple, but seldom or never came near it, keeping to their own rites and ceremonies. Their doctrine was very enigmatical, contemplative, and sublime, but they were of

[1] See Plin. Nat. Hist., l. v., c. 17.

very moral, innocent, and innocuous lives,[1] especially those of Egypt, so excellently described by Philo, that Eusebius thinks them to have been Christians of St. Mark's conversion; but this is doubted. They were great fasters, and given to high speculations, as, amongst other things, the names and mysteries of angels, though men of exceeding modesty and humility as to outward behaviour. This makes some think St. Paul had reflections upon this sect,[2] where he perstringes the adoration of those spirits and the superstitious niceties of this society, *Touch not, taste not, handle not,* &c.; this austere institution prohibiting divers meats and things more strictly than other sects.

5. HERODIANS.

There remain the *Herodians,* whom some think to have been but a part of that tyrant's guard, or other of his courtiers, who, to ingratiate themselves with him, affirmed Herod to be the long and now expected Messiah; for, indeed, they seem to have been courtiers, who egregiously flattered him with this high title. Mighty active they were to promote his magnificence, by exacting tribute to *Cæsar.*[3] By such their master maintained his credit at Rome; for being an usurper in Judæa, as he had obtained the government by their power, so he was to procure the continuance of his patron's favour. They were (it seems) Sadducees as to their opinions, though styled by the Evangelists[4] *the*

[1] Joseph. Antiq., l. xviii., c. 2.
[2] Col., ii., 18-21.
[3] Matt., xxii., 16.
[4] Matt., xvi., 6.

leaven of Herod; those Sadducean principles being most accommodated to his intent, who, as we said, was but an usurper.

6. SAMARITANS.

What the Samaritans were, the story tells us to have been the descendants of those who were sent back from the captivity of the Ten Tribes, being a mixture of Jews and Heathen, to people the wasted country about that city. They embraced the Five Books of Moses only, and worshipped at Mount Gerizim; were averse to strangers, and nicely affecting outward purity.

7. ZEALOTS.

Lastly, the *Zealots*, a kind of fifth monarchists, a most fierce and truculent sect, (as described by Josephus to the life) who, under pretence of extraordinary zeal for the law, perpetrated most astonishing barbarities, and these with the rest became at last so insolent and rebellious, as provoked the Romans to repress their sedition, abolishing their great Sanhedrim and Council. They put the Temple under tribute and a garrison, repealed many of their laws and privileges, and stripped them of their authority, that they had no power in capital offences. Under these animadversions still continuing mutinous, their intestine confusions brought the Roman armies to invest their city, and to lay both it and their glorious Temple in ashes, after an obstinate resistance; and such a siege, as for the calamities brought upon them by their divisions within it, the history of no age has recorded anything so astonishing. There

were no less than eleven hundred thousand Jews who perished in the city by famine and pestilence, such as was never heard of since the Creation, the several sects falling out within the city, and murdering one another; ninety-seven thousands were slain, thirty were sold for a trifling piece of money; they crucified so many, that there were not trees enough to nail them to; and seven hundred thousands were put to death afterwards in Egypt, by an edict of the Emperor Adrian, forbidding any of that nation, on pain of death, so much as to presume to look towards Jerusalem, their fondling and desired city, which was now razed to the ground, not one stone left upon another, according to our Blessed Lord's prediction. And when it was attempted to be rebuilt, fire issued from the earth and overthrew the foundations, as Ammianus Marcellinus, a Pagan himself, reports.

In a word, the whole nation was so dispersed and scattered, as they could never since unite, but have been as vagabonds over all countries, a curse and execration for almost seventeen hundred years, without one portion of land, without laws, prince, people, temple, altar, or God in the world, to regard them; the like never having happened to any race of mankind from the beginning of the Creation to this day. So that now was the Sceptre, according to Jacob's prophecy, departed indeed from Judah, and the Lawgiver from between his feet; the Sacrifice and Oblation ceasing, as was foretold by Daniel, the Messiah, the great Sacrifice, being cut off, who came to finish and make an end of trans-

gression, reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in the everlasting righteousness of the Gospel.[1]

Thus, for the murder of their Redeemer, and aversion to his doctrine, which would have reformed them from their hypocrisy and wickedness, were they brought to ruin, their holy city trodden under foot of the Gentiles, and so still remains, whilst the city of God is built up in its stead, not in Jerusalem, but in all places where the Gospel is spread, because its builder and master is God—not with hands, but to be eternal in the Heavens.

SECTION IV.

OF THE JEWISH DISCIPLINE, AND ITS AUSTERITY.

Thus have we shown the imperfection of the Jewish and Mosaic religion; that it consisted chiefly in rites and ceremonies,[2] which, being typical only, were therefore never intended to be of perpetual obligation. For it would doubtless then have been as universal and general, as it was particular and national, calculated for the Jews only, and hardly so much as known and taken notice of by any, till the conquests of the great Alexander, they living in a remote, narrow, and obscure corner of the world, who neither married, traded, nor conversed out of their own country, but among themselves; so that they were severed from the rest of mankind, as by a wall of partition; and had (as we have

[1] Dan., ix., 24-26. [2] Gal., iii., 21.

shown) divers laws quite different from other nations, and that by a particular pact and covenant struck between God and them; fitted to their morose, harsh, surly, and perverse dispositions; for which reason God, perhaps, did not think those laws so fit for the rest of mankind.[1] These constitutions chiefly concerned the outward observance;[2] and, accordingly, the reward consisted in the affluence of terrene things: higher matters were out of their ken as yet.

They believed such as were afflicted with any calamity to be enemies of God, smitten by Him and in His disfavour; nay, esteemed them as accursed. And thus riches and outward prosperity were marks of piety, and so necessary, that one could never be a prophet, or dignified with that sublime calling, unless he were opulent: and that a religious man must needs be happy in this life. This opinion was so rooted in them, that our Blessed Saviour, coming in those mean circumstances, was a scandal and offence to them who looked for the Messiah to appear in all worldly pomp and greatness; such as never potentate had the like.[3]

The moral virtues and precepts of humanity, laws more proportionable to the dignity of man's nature, were but sparingly taught among them. Their jealousy, use of polygamy, inhospitableness to those who were not of their religion, and other rigorous ordinances—some permitted for the hardness of their hearts—made

[1] Moses novos ritus contrariosque cæteris mortalibus indidit. Tacitus, l. iv., and so Juvenal, Sat. xiv. [2] Gal., iv., 9.

[3] See Grotius, De jure Belli et pacis, l. xi., 9, 15.

them strangers to charity, chastity, forgiveness of injuries, &c.; as they themselves had no pardon for presumptuous sins, their law a dead letter, and their rewards but temporal, were unapt to produce that unsinning obedience required under the Gospel. Besides that, the soul's immortality was so obscurely hinted to them, that the very Heathen round about them, especially the learned, seemed to have had more clear notions of it by the light of nature only. Neither does this detract from the wisdom and goodness of God, who best knows His time, and does by degrees, and as seems to Him good, manifest His holy will. To see the sun at once, without a twilight, oppresses the organ. God proceeds by little and little, as we are able to bear and receive. This nation were a reproachfully slothful, dull, untractable, stiff-necked people, and therefore to be curbed only by rigorous methods. Wherefore, upon occasions extraordinary, He raised prophets among them, who taught them how little God delighted in ceremonies and operose worship, with obedience, which was better than sacrifice and the fat of rams. He also encouraged them with promises of mercy, upon their repentance and turning to Him with their hearts. But this was rarely, and still by degrees, which showed He had some farther and more sublime intentions to be revealed in time to others, as well as to themselves; and therefore, as the Apostle [1] shows, it did not become them to pride themselves in their boasted peculiarity. The whole Bible of the Old Testament describes their

[1] Rom., ii.

prodigious wealth, idolatry, superstition, and other wickedness;[1] and we see, by sad consequence, that all those denunciations of Prophets, miracles done among them, captivity, plagues, and other judgments, made little impression on them; they still grew worse and worse, even to the crucifying of Him who came to save them; so that God was provoked to reject them altogether. For, since the law made nothing partial, nor with all its rigour was able to bring men to Him, it was necessary to introduce a more consummate righteousness, an Evangelical and easy law. And that it was His holy purpose to demolish the partition-wall we have argument from Malachi, iii., 1, 3, by raising up a nobler Prophet and greater Legislator than Moses; and make a new and more gracious Covenant, to supply the defects of the first; another priesthood,[2] &c., by which He should gather all nations,[3] yea, create new Heavens;[4] and send His own Son to effect and accomplish all these glorious things,[5] as we see it came to pass, verifying the unprofitableness and weakness of the former disciplization.

And thus have we made it plain, how the constitution of the Jewish discipline was maintained by a sejunction and separation from all other people of the earth. They were, indeed, the only nation under heaven that worshipped the one true God and no other; and such,

[1] Jer., v.; Ezek., xx.; Isai., i., 4, 5, 6.

[2] Ps. cx. 4.

[3] Isai., lxvi., 12, 19.

[4] Isai., lxv., 17.

[5] Ibid., lix., 20; Jer., xxiii., 5, 6; Hagg., ii., 7.

for the true religion, did the very Heathen acknowledge; for Varro, having run over the whole catalogue of the Pagan Deities, concludes that to be the true God who was adored without an image; and expressly mentions the Jews; nay, and that it had been well to have followed them in it. We see how happy they were whilst they held themselves to this. From the very moment that Abraham forsook his father's idol family, he was blessed with a peculiar promise of a seed, in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed, and united into one religion, as in effect it was shortly after our Saviour's coming in the flesh, so wonderfully did His holy doctrine obtain.

SECTION V.

THE TYPICAL CHARACTER OF THE JEWISH RELIGION.

Now, the ministry of the Mosaical Religion consisting of Priests, Prophets, and Kings, let us consider how all these high qualifications were accordingly united in the mission and person of Christ. For then was this separation from all other nations to cease; for so it did. The temporal Sceptre (as we have shown) departing from Judah, he being both Priest and Sacrificer too, their sacerdocy and sacrifice were brought to an end; and being Prophet by mission and commission, after Him were no more prophets; and, by ancient tradition of the Jews themselves, whoever was the Messiah, implied royalty, and carried a king in the very name. Now, had not Christ our Lord been a

Prophet, He could not have revealed to us His Father's will. Had He not been Priest, He could not have offered sacrifice; and, were He not a King, never could He have saved His people from their sins, and given them those royal privileges, promised to His faithful subjects, of reigning one day with Him; nay, appointing and calling them to kingdoms also, not of this world, but in the world to come, which was the rock they split upon.

Nor was Almighty God less merciful to the sinful world; for, when mankind had universally gone astray and defected, He designed a Saviour, qualified to appease and reconcile us to His Divine justice, without reproach, calling and rescuing many out of ignorance and superstition, as the patriarch before mentioned, with others; the Jewish Religion becoming conspicuous to all the nations round about them, as being first planted in Syria, the most proper to be dispersed through all the world, and first inhabited after the universal Flood. Now, though the only ordinary salvation was offered to the Jews,[1] by which they had mighty advantages over the Gentiles, having also the Law and the Prophets, yea, and Synagogues in divers places, even after they were subjugated by the Romans; yet were not the Gentiles altogether neglected, a star miraculously appearing to them at the Messiah's nativity, a portentous eclipse at His crucifixion. They had likewise the prophecies of the Sybils, to which divers of the Pagan authors gave testimony.

[1] Rom., ix., 4, 5.

But however it fared with the virtuous Gentiles before the Incarnation, after His coming, and when the Jews had learnt and seen in how mean circumstances He appeared; both of them startled at the Cross,[1] counting the Wisdom of God but foolishness, in comparison with their high-flown fancies and expectations, rejecting His counsel against themselves. Thus He came to His own, and His own received Him not;[2] though both saw the miracles He did, and heard the blessed Doctrine He preached; nay, and were evidently convinced beyond all contradiction; yet would they neither hear nor see, whilst those who did receive Him, to them He gave power to become the sons of God. And those who, before His coming, knew nothing of the mystery, were yet saved by His coming, and the propitiation He was to make;[3] God being pleased by way of anticipation to forbear, till the fulness and amplitude of time; in the interval graciously accepting the sacrifices which were offered, and the types of this all-sufficient oblation.

That this was, in the mean time, the true and only veritable religion, before our Saviour came, and how it may still so appear, (the Christian Faith being but the same they professed, spiritualized) we shall show. For, as to what the Jews at present profess, it is but a mean carcase and corruption of the ancient Synagogue, mingled with innumerable vain and fabulous traditions, horrid blasphemies, and extravagancies beyond all that

[1] I. Cor., i., 23. [2] John, i., 11.

[3] Sanguis Christi profuit, antequàm fuit.

one meets with among the most ignorant Pagans. We have, in part, already shown the rise and progress of the Jewish religion, by what a special grace and favour it pleased God at first to take unto Himself a people from among the Heathen world. For, when ignorance, superstition, mysterious impurities, tyranny, and all manner of licentiousness, had perverted the nations,—that vicious men were deified, brute animals adored for gods, and the natural principles of religion universally depraved,—a certain poor, despicable people, in an obscure corner of the world, emerged with the noblest sentiments of piety and severe virtue, representing the Divinity as an Eternal Being, Infinite, Omnipotent, Omniscient, Wise, Holy, independent and self-happy: Him a certain family of their forefathers worshipped, observing His laws, and renouncing the wicked customs of the age they lived in; forsook all they had, to adore and serve Him.

These, growing into multitudes, and for many years partly sojourning, and partly detained under cruel servitude, became not only of slavish tempers and very despicable, but such as, in all likelihood, had perverted their religion among those idolatrous Egyptians, where they were in bondage, as, by their continual proneness to idol worship, may be presumed. So that, far from being like their Patriarchal ancestors, these were, of all other, the most unpolished, stupid, and averse to all good—obstinate and stiff-necked, as God does frequently complain. Indeed, the Israelites and Idumæans had the same grandfather, nor, doubtless, wanted they the

good and holy instructions of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, &c., as well as the rest. Yet these it pleased God, of His special grace and favour, to select and make His peculiar people, under (as we have shown) a peculiar government and law, which, being by them observed, though with divers interruptions, for two thousand years, manifestly showed the faith, which they professed, could have its original from no other than Almighty God; not, I say, as now corrupted, but as at first revealed and received: this the Holy Scriptures perspicuously make out.

In the mean time, stupendous it is to consider, how a people in possession of a country, laws, and religion, for so many ages, should at once be brought to such calamities as never happened to any nation under the cope of heaven; the malediction, for almost as many thousand ages since, altogether astonishing; whilst all their former captivities and calamities amounted to but one hundred and sixty-two years, the last has continued for nearly seventeen hundred years, without any relaxation or bettering their condition, notwithstanding all efforts and revolutions of other nations, and their since exceeding caution of offending God any more by those gross idolatries; for which before they had been so severely punished. The Babylonish servitude had, long before our Saviour's incarnation, reformed them of that sin, to which they usually imputed all their former sufferings. Something, therefore, extraordinary must needs be the cause; some horrid, exterminating crime, that should so long have detained them under so

execrable a judgment. Never read we of any nation so universally ruined, dispersed, and despised, and who have not a foot of earth more than what covers their wretched carcases when they fall; they, who were once the happiest people under heaven, the favourites of, and dear to God. They have now neither country, home, cities, temple, priests, altars, king, nor governor; but are vagrants over all the earth, without God in the world, and aliens from the commonwealth of Israel; and all this most demonstrably, because they crucified the Lord of Glory, putting to an opprobious and malicious death the Great Messias, who came with such love and compassion to redeem them not only from the difficulties of the ceremonial law, and the prejudices they lay under by those corruptions which had so generally defiled it, but from all their sins and offences.

Nor for all this is their hatred at all extinguished; they still blaspheme that glorious Saviour, deny His mission; and, though they cannot but acknowledge the miracles He wrought among them, they say He was a magician, and affected them by the power of Beelzebub. To this St. Augustine gives answer that, if He were such, He was so before He was born; for He, whom they blasphemously thus accuse, sends them to their own prophets and predictions; so that it appears He knew the successes of every thing before He had a human being. And for the other, our Blessed Saviour Himself convinces them how unreasonable it was to fancy that Satan should cast out Satan, and the strong

man eject himself. Of these and the like nonsensical blasphemies their Talmud is full, and tells us God Almighty was so sorry He had violated His oath concerning the captivity of their nation, that He condescended to ask pardon of Rhabbas, son of Rhabana; and that, desiring to be absolved from His word, the Rabbi said aloud, *Lord, I absolve thee.* With these and the like prodigious dreams, is their present religion stuffed. The veil is still before their eyes as thick as ever, which God, of His infinite mercy, hastens to take away, that they may at last look on Him whom they have pierced, and be saved among the true Israelites; that the blood they have brought on themselves and children may be done away by the precious blood which was shed for them. For, though the sacrifice of the son of God was always pleasing to His Father for the wonderful condescension of His love and charity, yet most hateful was the sin of those who sacrificed Him.

Let us yet consider the providential ends concurring to this mystery, namely, the death of our Lord; Caiaphas and his cabal persecuted Him for reasons of state, and to maintain their places; the Devils, for our Saviour's casting them out of their usurped possessions by whole legions, and because they knew that, in murdering and bringing Him to death, God would dispossess and reject that people, who should be guilty of so impious ingratitude, and so abandon those whom He had so signally preserved from perdition.[1]

[1] Whereas, through all their other wickedness and captivity, He still heard, forgave, and restored them (Deut., xxx.; Nehem., i., 8, 9)

The chief priests would destroy Him, with the Scribes and Pharisees, because He thwarted and contradicted their false doctrine, hypocrisy, and covetousness. Thus it pleased God the Father to leave His only begotten and beloved Son to their implacable rage, that He might suffer and expiate for our sins. Thus, I say, out of all these contradictory designs and particular interests, He wrought his own most blessed ends and our salvation; for by this, Satan, crafty as he was, was himself ejected from his dominions over the blinded and abused world. The Jews, who crucified our Lord, to reconcile the jealous Romans and preserve their nation, were utterly destroyed by them, and the empire of Christ established for ever. And those who by all wicked means thought to free themselves, for thus rejecting their Messiah, were made miserable slaves and a people so undone, that, (as one truly observes) wherever we meet a Jew, we see a stone of the demolished Temple, and a ruin of Jerusalem never to be rebuilt, for a monument of their prodigious ingratitude.

Many good works did He amongst them; He healed their diseases, fed their hunger, instructed their ignorance, raised their dead. For which of all these did they use Him thus barbarously? For this, then, came

—though since, and now still, they are the most averse from idolatry, &c., for which they formerly were so signally punished, and that now they fast and pray; yet do they suffer by an exile of 1700 years;—no prophet appears; they still are under the curse, and their religion is so corrupted, that they are daily more and more blind.

the vengeance of Heaven upon them within forty years to the utmost, the time He proved their forefathers in the wilderness, for so long was the Lord pleased to spare them, that they might repent. But, being hardened in all impiety, after they had slain the Shepherd and murdered the Heir, they worry the flock and persecute His disciples, till their own iniquities brought upon them a swift destruction, a calamity so exceedingly great, that Titus himself, who was God's instrument to inflict it, refused the triumphal crown and pompous ceremony due to his conquest—so sanglant and beyond all description lamentable was the catastrophe of those he had overcome. Their own blood and malicious factions hastened their destruction within Jerusalem, as much as the Roman armies without.

Thus did Providence order it, showing that He alone was the invisible Emperor and Conductor in that famous expedition, according to the predicted curses threatened two thousand years before,[1] and that of our Lord Himself, deploring and weeping over that once beloved city.[2]

Lastly, let us consider what infinite and universal good the same wise and merciful God brought out of all this evil, according to His impervestigable ways and eternal purpose of grace.

[1] Deut., xxviii. [2] Matt., xxiii., 37, 39.

CHAPTER X.

OF THE CHRISTIAN AND EVANGELICAL RELIGION, TYPIFIED IN THE JEWISH.

SECTION I. INTRODUCTION.
SECTION II. THAT THE JEWISH DISPENSATION, BEING BUT TEMPORARY AND TYPICAL, HAD ITS FINAL ACCOMPLISHMENT IN THE MESSIAH.
SECTION III. THAT JESUS CHRIST WAS THE TRUE MESSIAH.
SECTION IV. CHRISTIANITY CONTRASTED WITH OTHER RELIGIONS.

SECTION I. INTRODUCTION.

When neither natural religion, ritual, nor positive laws, under all the former dispensations, were able to recommend and bring us to God, through the weakness and imperfection both of them and the whole race of man, fallen as he was from the light which should guide and conduct him, as yet but groping after the way, it pleased the same God, in the fulness of time, mindful of His merciful promise to our forefathers, no more to keep His people under types and shadows, the pedagogy of ceremonies and material sacrifices, which could not make the comers thereunto perfect, after the many and unsuccessful messages, prophets, and teachers—it pleased God, I say, to send His own and only Son, the long-expected Messiah, the Lord Jesus, who should

teach us a more living spiritual law and rule, should give us more mighty aids to subdue our aversion, and illuminate our understanding in the knowledge of those saving truths which, till now, lay undiscovered for ages, and were hidden under the veil to the Jews, but to the Gentiles under a cloud of midnight darkness. In a word, to show the glad tidings of salvation, that *evangelical religion*, the everlasting Gospel, which was to put an end not only to the Jewish but to all other worship; namely, as well to be a light to lighten the Gentiles, as to be the glory of His people Israel, and to continue so to the end and consummation of the world.

And though, as nearer approaching the happy period, the day began to break, and prophecies became more perspicuous, yet was the age then so universally corrupted, that, had not the Sun of Righteousness appeared, darkness, confusion, and atheism, had involved the whole world. It was now, then, that the Messiah, according to the prophecy going before concerning Him, being ineffably conceived of the Holy Ghost in the womb of a Virgin,[1] was born perfect God and perfect man, and in all things subject to our infirmities, (sin only excepted) to be a Saviour as well of that miserable and ungrateful people the Jews, (who, though about this period earnestly expecting, rejected Him) as He promised to their forefathers, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, David, as to the whole race of mankind, strangers to the Covenant, and without God in the world.[2]

[1] Isaiah, vii., 14.

[2] The miserable state the whole world was in, and how aban-

All these He came to rescue from the darkness of Atheism, ignorance, and superstition of the Heathen; the ineffectual and burdensome ceremonies of the Jews, to the participation of His infinite grace, and by His unsinning obedience fulfilling the law in a more divine, rational, and spiritual way, dignifying our imperfect services by His most perfect righteousness. For God would now no longer connive at the universal ignorance even of the Heathen world, (as the Apostle tells the Athenians) nor permit Satan to delude mankind,[1] though all this while He left not himself without a witness, nor the very Gentiles without means sufficient to convince them of their gross errors and superstitions. For, besides the aspectable works of Creation, natural light and reason, they had at this time some glimmerings and expectations, as well as the Jews, whose prophets spake more feelingly towards the dawning of the Gospel. It being at that time the common report, as Suetonius tells us, that out of the East should rise the universal Monarch;[2] and this Pliny seems to say should be ushered in by an extraordinary star, as a lucky omen of some great benefit to mankind.

In order to this, about seventy years before the final destruction of the Jews, according to the prediction of Malachi,[3] God sent His messenger, the great precursor, John the Baptist, whose miraculous birth and other circumstances showed how great a person he should

doned at this period to all manner of abomination and vice, we find described by Eusebius, De Demonstrat. Evang., l. viii., in Præfat.

[1] Acts, xvii. [2] Suet. Vespas., c. 4. [3] Mal., iii., 1.

prove, in order that, by his preaching repentance and reformation, he might qualify men for the approach of the Messiah, and the glad tidings of the Gospel.[1] That he himself not being whom they expected,[2] was yet commissioned to preach and prepare them for His coming, and to let them know they were no longer to flatter themselves with their former privileges, as being the posterity of Abraham; but that, if they did not now amend and bear better fruit, the axe would be laid to the root, and they cut down like barren and unfruitful trees.

Those who generally embraced this doctrine, he initiated by baptism, which was a ceremony the Jews themselves used at the receiving of new proselytes. Men, says Maimonides, were circumcised and washed also; women only baptized, with a peace-offering, during the standing of the Temple; and the rite was of such antiquity, as to have been practised before the law itself,[3] (baptism being always understood by washing of their clothes;) so that it appears they entered not into the first Covenant without it. Hence St. Paul[4] speaks of baptism not as a ceremony, but doctrine. They did not, therefore, wonder at this action of St. John. Besides, they held that their Messiah was to be introduced with that *ablution*, as may be gathered from the history. Whilst John was about this office, receiving all that came, publicans, sinners, and soldiers, and men of all conditions, to show that

[1] In the New Testament called the *Kingdom of Heaven*, as being the only means leading to it.

[2] John, i., 25. [3] Exod., xix., 10. [4] Heb., vi., 2.

God was no respecter of persons, he told them he was neither *that* Elias, whom they also had a tradition should come before their Messiah, nor himself that illustrious person, yet he plainly showed him to the multitude; when, having the honour to baptize his own Saviour, he saw the heavens open, and the dove-like Sacred spirit descending on him, heard that heavenly voice, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*[1].

Thus attested by the Father, came the holy Jesus to be baptized; not that *He* needed cleansing, who was to wash away the sins of others, but that, being pleased to assume our nature, He was in our stead to fulfil all righteousness. This happening about the thirtieth year of our Saviour's birth,[2] (for John had begun to preach the year before) our Blessed Lord, who till now had lived a humble and obscure life, began to manifest himself and own His mission, first to his countrymen, (after the flesh) the Jews, and to preach his excellent and spiritual doctrine, and to confirm what He taught with such miracles, as nothing could have produced but the Divine power. He sharply reproves their horrible corruptions; what doctrines and glosses they had superinduced and put upon the law, shows them why they were to worship no longer at Jerusalem alone, and confine religion to particular places, or fancy and pride themselves as the only people of God, whilst they made

[1] S. John, i. 33-4.

[2] Our Lord was born on December 25th, in the forty-third year of Augustus's reign, C. Jul. Cæsar Vipsanianus and L. Æmilius Paulus being consuls.

such outward professions of holiness, hypocrites as they were within.

But this plain dealing and discovery of their errors, perstringing their covetousness, formality, malice, and spiritual pride, excited such a hatred against Him, notwithstanding all the miracles and good works wrought amongst them, having done more among them in three days, than had been done under all their various dispensations for a thousand years, they never desisted persecuting Him, till they had put Him to a most cruel and ignominious death. And albeit, after this, He confirmed and asserted His mission and divine character by His stupendous resurrection from the dead, and the derivation of His miraculous gifts on His disciples, yet did they not believe on Him to be the Christ. They rejected His testimony and counsel against themselves, blaspheming His sacred name, and endeavoured with all the spite which malice could infuse, to obstruct the progress of His doctrine. When, therefore, having given charge to His apostles and their successors to proselyte all nations to His religion, He after forty days ascended visibly into heaven, confirming and enabling them by the miraculous gift of tongues to divulge that saving Gospel for the conversion of the world; the wonderful success whereof, together with its incomparable purity and perfection above all other religions, and consequently asserting it to be the only truth, is what we shall make out beyond all possible contradiction.

SECTION II.

THAT THE JEWISH DISPENSATION BEING BUT TEMPORARY AND TYPICAL, HAD ITS FINAL ACCOMPLISHMENT IN THE MESSIAH.

That religion and religious worship are due to God, we have learnt from the law of nature, and that there is a future reward (of congruity at least) established for those who live according to it. We have showed the utter impossibility of attaining that reward by a false religion, and asserted the Scriptures, which direct us, to be true.

We come now to the spiritual and evangelical, of which the ritual and temporal was but the figure and adumbration, namely, the *Christian Religion*, as that which was the first in intention of Almighty God, the Great Legislator and Arbiter of His own worship; and in relation to which alone, whatsoever agreeable service former religions might possibly pretend to, was accepted.

We have in the former chapter shown to how sad a period both the Jewish nation and religion came, and how that enclosure and partition wall was taken away, to admit Gentiles into the Church, and by a gracious Providence, to succeed it. For it is evident that the first Covenant and Alliance did not extend to all, (the promises of which could respect only a single and peculiar people) nor indeed was it intended it should, forasmuch as all the world could not have dwelt and been contained in the same country, especially in Jewry, (being one of the least of Asia) nor under the same

Temple, which, how ample and capacious soever, could not have been sufficient for all those to have worshipped, and have done their devotions in, to whom the joyful sound of the Gospel come. Besides, had Circumcision been universal, it could have been no sacrament of distinction. And there must needs have been another Covenant, essentially differing from the first, (according to that of the prophet Jeremiah[1]) far more perfect. But yet this was not to last but for a time, as a mystical signification of the circumcision of the heart, not to be required of the Jews only, but of all the world in the New Covenant, which entitles Christians to a spiritual and better Canaan than what that rite did promise.[2]

The law had once no less than four advantages, discriminating the Jews from all the world; which were then marks of the true religion: first, the knowledge of the true Deity; second, the Sacerdocy, or Priesthood, and, consequently, the only right to sacrifice; third, their government under a Theocracy, God being their invisible King; their visible, one of a particular tribe; and, lastly, the gift of Prophecy. None of which prerogatives they have at present, nor have had for many ages, whereby to discriminate themselves to be the only people of God; but such character and evident signs to the contrary, that no nation or people under Heaven are in so sad condition. The knowledge

[1] Jer, xxxi., 31, 33, 37.

[2] Gen., xvii., 7. Salvation was not absolutely tied to that sign, since Abraham pleased God before he received it, and it was omitted for no less than forty years in the Wilderness.

of the True God is now in a manner universal. Their sacrifices are now quite abolished, as being annexed to their Temple only, long since destroyed and burnt. Nor have they priest or Levite to sacrifice, all their genealogies being confounded. Nor have they king or prince amongst them; the whole nation, who should be his subjects, being long since miserably dispersed, destroyed, and enslaved. In a word, the spirit of prophecy has ceased among them, which was the prime and most conspicuous sign of their election, and being so near to God.

The external religion, therefore, of the Jews could be no other than typical, relating to something which was to succeed it, and become universal. For instance, the faithful and elect people were prefigured sometimes by the people of Israel, sometimes by the primogeniture, by the Levites, &c., so that there is nothing more exact than the proportion between the Christian and Jewish Church. The Israelites were separated from all other nations and people; so the Christian, from all other religions: the Israelites were abhorred by all other nations; so the Christian, by all the wicked world: the Israelites were under oppression and servitude for a long time; the Church of Christ, hated, persecuted, and cruelly martyred from time to time: the Israelites had no other guide and leader than God, no light but His fiery pillar, no protection during all their tedious wanderings in the desert, but God's wonderful protecting Hand, no bread but what rained from Heaven; and the Christian Church may say the same.

And, as God was in Israel, and would erect there only His Tabernacle and Temple, the faithful Christian only is both His Temple and Tabernacle.

Their divine service prefigured the spiritual: the Levites, all the faithful, who in God's account are princes: the white garments and ministers of the Tabernacle, the innocence and sanctity of those who follow the Lamb and approach to God: the purity of the body, that of the heart: so the blood of goats and lambs, the blood of Christ: the waters of purification, which cleansed the stains of the body, prefigured the ablution of baptism, accompanied with the spiritual grace which sanctifies our souls: by Abraham's two wives, that of Sarah, the evangelical covenant; by that of Hagar, the law of bondage, namely, the Jewish ceremonies: to Mount Sinai, oppose Mount Sion: in the sound of the trumpet, the voice of the Gospel, which goes out into all the world. In a word, to Moses, the mediator of the law and Old Testament, Christ, the Mediator of the New and better Testament.

Again: the different states of the church are figured by the different states of the people of Israel; our spiritual servitude, by their temporal; our deliverance, by their return out of captivity, and the like. So just and natural are the identities and resemblances, that Holy Scriptures do not unfrequently blend and mingle them together in the same chapter; that which concerns the temporal of the one, the spiritual of the other; and this in almost all occurrences and events; remarks obvious, yet so important, that, without observing them, it is not

possible to understand the Old Testament, or with them, to be ignorant of it.

In short, whatever happened under the New Testament, was shadowed in the Old, even from the very beginning of time, even from the first Adam to the second: the tree of life in Paradise was to be eaten as a figure of Christ, who calls himself a tree in divers Scriptures; and this typical tree and fruit were only to preserve a natural and worldly life; Christ eaten by faith, an eternal life. But of the typical tree our first parents did never yet eat, because, being in a state of innocence, they had no need of it. The tree of which they might have eaten, they neglected; of that which they were prohibited to eat, of that they eat. The Tree of Life was Christ; the Tree of Knowledge, the law.[1] The Tree of Life symbolized Christ with all his graces evangelical; the eating of it, the union of mankind in Him. The Tree of Knowledge implied the law in all its rigour, and the prohibition of eating it, that we were not to obtain justification by the works of the law; and, therefore, to depend on, and nourish our hope and faith in Christ alone, the true and real *Arbor vitæ*. Thus, as eating manna figured the real union of that food with the bodies and faith of the Israelites, so was it a type of our union with Christ in the Holy Sacrament. And, in like manner, the Paschal Lamb, and all those other legal sacrifices, were types of that Great One offered upon the Cross. And divers of these sacrifices were to be eaten, to intimate man's

[1] Lex, data Adæ et Evæ, est quasi matrix omnium præceptorum Dei, quæ pullulârunt posteà data per Mosen.—Tertull. advers. Jud.

union and coalescence (as it were) with Christ the antitype, by the spiritual manducation of His sacred Body in the consecrated elements.

In sum, Jesus the Lamb, being slain from the beginning of the world (in designation), all sacrifices and atonements from that period were effectual only by His blood. Nor was Almighty God ever reconciled to any sinner before, under, or since the law of Jewish Ordinances, but by virtue, regard to, and intuition of the Blessed blood of Jesus! Though they who were so long under the law and Mosaical Dispensation, they knew it not but rarely, and under types and shadows, till the Messiah, the substance, appeared, and removed the veil. On this, then, may we depend, that all sins whatsoever are remitted us in baptism, and all committed after baptism remissible; and the person committing them shall receive remission, upon true repentance, at any time, according to the tenor of the Gospel. For sin, after illumination, through frailty committed, we are taught by Christ daily to ask forgiveness.[1] Then are we firmly to believe that comfortable article, "forgiveness of sins," as an undoubted truth, exciting us to thankfulness, to love, and future care. Again: wicked Cain was a type of Christ's enemies; Esau's despising his primogeniture, a type of the profane renouncing the inheritance of Heaven, for the present enjoyments and sensual satisfaction of this life; Lot's wife, of such as having escaped sin by God's grace, fall back and apostatize again. The action of Sampson over the Philistines, of David over Goliah, are types of the vic-

[1] Acts, ii., 38.

tories and triumphs of Jesus Christ. The presence of God in the Tabernacle figured the Incarnation of the Word, which dwells,[1] as in a tabernacle, in the faithful. The writings of Moses were the canon and rule of all the Prophets; and therefore Isaiah, Malachi, and even our Blessed Lord himself, send their auditors for these things to Moses; and it is said that his last *Epicedium*[2] comprehends the sum of all the prophecies which respect the Church.

Thus the religion which we now call *Christian* is (as St. Augustine says) but still the old religion,[3] which began with mankind, though it has not been called *Christian* but since the coming of Christ. Our Lord did not affect the bringing in of novelties, so that many of His Parables we find to have been taken out of the ancient Jewish Doctors,[4] as that of the Labourers in the Vine-

[1] Deut., xxxii,, xxxiii. [2] Ἐσκήνωσε. St. John, i., 14.

[3] Eusebius (Hist. Eccles., l. i., c. 4) shows that the Christian religion is the same with the Patriarchal, even before Moses, which he proves by many instances.

[4] [The following passage, from the pen of the learned Mr. Hartwell Horne, contradicts this assertion. Speaking of the Parables of the New Testament, he says, "These compositions of Christ were all *original*. Dr. Lightfoot and others have shown that Jesus often borrowed proverbs and phrases from the Jews. But an Inspired Teacher would not surely propose *whole parables*, that were in common use, for his own. Nor does it appear that any body used the parables of Christ before His time. For instance, the parable of the Householder and the Labourers, (of the Ten Virgins, and many others) which is extant in the Jerusalem Gemara, was written an age and a half at least after the destruction of the Temple. It is more probable, therefore, that it was written in imitation of Christ, than borrowed from any ancient tradition. Introd. Crit. Stud. H. Script., vol. ii., part ii., chap. v., sect. 6.]

yard; the rich glutton; the Wise and Foolish Virgins. We have shown already, how Baptism and the Holy Eucharist had their spring ftom the Jewish purifications and Passover. The *Schelikkim*, *Nehijm*, and *Khakhamim*, answered to the Apostles, Doctors, pastors of the primitive Church; the *Niddui* and *Cherem* to their excommunication; and so of sundry more.

For thus it pleased the Divine Wisdom, by innumerable types and figures, to inculcate the perfection, excellency, functions, and ministry of our great redemption.

To proceed yet a little farther: Isaac, conceived in the womb of a barren mother, the sole delight and only son of an indulgent father, and the foundation of that mighty promise to Abraham and his seed for ever, was offered in figure on a mount, even by the hand of his tender father, and raised (as it were) from death under the fatal knife, to be the source of a posterity like the stars of Heaven for number. See, on the other hand, our Blessed Lord Jesus, the Messiah, in whom alone his Father was well pleased; our Isaac, the spring of all our blessings and promises infinitely exceeding those of God to Abraham, conceived in the womb of a pure virgin, was offered a real and bloody sacrifice for us on Mount Calvary, was miraculously raised from the dead, and became father of a posterity more numerous than the stars of Heaven, and the sands of the sea for multitude.

Joseph is sold by his unkind brethren, out of envy, accused falsely, and condemned, because he would not sin against God with a wanton adultress. See him delivered from prison, advanced and honoured by the

prince, representing our Jesus, sold and delivered to the wicked Jews, his brethren, for envy; condemned and put to death, because He resisted the corrupted and adulterated Synagogue. See him, *I say*, freed from the prison of the grave, and advanced to sit at the right hand of the King of Kings.

Moses, the mediator of the old and legal covenant, preserved from the cruel Pharaoh, exposed upon the water, saved from perishing in it, that he might save and rescue the people and Church of God, represented Christ, who came into the world, the Mediator of a New Covenant, rescued from the murderous Herod, that He might be the Saviour of the world.

Jonas, swallowed by a monstrous fish, to appease the raging tempest, is cast upon the shore about the third day after; so Christ, devoured by the cruel grave, on the third day emerges from its jaws.

David, from a poor and humble shepherd, advanced to be a monarch, was the most remarkable type and figure of that great Shepherd of the flock, and Bishop of our souls, who, after all His exinanition, and the things He suffered for us, is become the Monarch of both worlds, the dominion of whose kingdom shall endure for ever.

Thus, Moses and the Law give the light to Christ[1]—Christ to Moses.

[1] That sacrifices were but types, consult Isai., i., 11—lviii.; Jer., vii., 21, 23; Micah, vi., 6, 7; Malachi, i., &c. Some even of their own Rabbins confess that they were all to cease, save those of praise and thanksgiving, in the days of the Messiah. Thus,

Now, all mankind being polluted with sins, no sacrifice from among them could possibly expiate those sins; and therefore God the Son, who was God and Man without sin, undertook it for him. The miracle, then, or rather mystery, of the Christian religion, consists in this—that He to whom sacrifice is offered is God; the victim offered to Him is God; and the Priest who offers it is God; and He who is offered is God and Man, that so to Him Man might be offered for the sin of man; the Lord Jesus being the Invisible Priest; the Priest, the visible Jesus. Therefore, the sacrifice of His Son is and always was pleasing to God the Father, but not the sin of those who so maliciously sacrificed Him.

To proceed, then, as to types and shadows, the Jewish religion was yet, during all that dispensation, certainly divine and true.[1] Witness the miracles, the sublimity of its morals, disinterestedness of its doctrine, as to holiness of life and accomplishment of its prophecies, though with all these exceedingly defective, and in divers things very weak and extravagant, but as they related to things and persons more sublime and perfect. For who can else comprehend or imagine that the great and infinitely Holy God should be God of but one small and despicable people and nation only? that the Divinity should be confined (as it were) to a material chest or little cabinet of wood? Him, whom the Heaven of Heavens could not contain, should dwell in a moving

Rabbi Hadurson (on Gen., xlii.—xlix.); and that in His days there should be no more distinction of beasts; Christ fulfilling the Law in a most perfect manner.

[1] I. Cor., x.

tent or temple made with hands? or that the external purity of the body should be so much insisted on by Him who is the Father of Spirits; that he should delight in the bloody sacrifices of innocent beasts, in commutation for the sins of wicked men? All these were mean, poor, and (as the Apostle calls them) beggarly elements.[1] He who is the God of Glory, before whom the angels veil their faces, and who dwells in the light inaccessible, should please Himself with mundane pomp and busy ceremonies of man? What possible proportion have all these to the infinite glory and wisdom of God?

But, when we worthily consider what was to follow and succeed all this preparation, and the analogy these things had to those to come, we shall find them to represent an economy and service highly becoming the wisdom and providence of God in a most admirable manner. For to begin with Abraham, for instance. Had not this faithful person quitted Ur of the Chaldees, his native and idolatrous country, he had continued an idolater, as were his parents.[2] Nor could he have preserved his posterity in the true religion and service of God; and so had his descendants failed of the promised blessing to all nations. In like manner had Jacob sojourned still with Laban, his children had likewise

[1] Gal., iv., 9.

[2] [That Abraham was an idolater before his call is plain from Holy Scriptures, though Josephus seems to intimate the contrary. Hence Joshua (xxiv., ii.) "said unto all the people, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abram, and the father of Nachen; *and they served other gods.*"]

been corrupted, as their uncle Esau's were, mingling with strangers; the holy race had been confounded, and consequently the genealogy of the glorious Messiah, who was, according to the flesh, to descend from a peculiar line and tribe of that stock, disordered.

It was, therefore, by signal Providence that all this was prevented, as was also even His sending the Patriarchs into Egypt, there to live by themselves, and afterwards his delivering them from servitude, and bringing them forth, to plant them where He did; since their alliances, hopes, promises, manners, inclinations, laws, ceremonies, and religion, were singularly and totally different from all other people and nations under heaven. For this effect, it was first necessary that God alone should be their King and Sovereign Magistrate. They were, indeed, for their frequent rebellions and departure from His laws, sometimes sorely afflicted, and seemingly abandoned under tedious and sharp captivities; yet did none of them last above seventy years, till they were freed again; lest, being deserted a longer time, they should utterly have lost and forgotten their religion, His praises, and that they were God's peculiar people, designed to be under this economy, till the Messiah, their true deliverer, should come.

In order to this, was first discovered to Abraham the knowledge of the true God, when all the rest of the world had forgotten Him, lying in ignorance and gross idolatry. To him was enjoined the covenant of circumcision, to be made in the concupiscential flesh, as a token of distinction from the impure nations; nor was

it, therefore, on any other account or natural cause or impediment (as some have profanely fancied), since men are far from using to receive such painful and difficult rites, and so averse to the tenderness of parents (as we may well conclude from the behaviour of Zipporah), though it had not also (as it has) something of indecent and opprobrious in it. And this rite must needs prove that the Author of their religion was God; it being ridiculous to conceive that human reason would have chosen an institution so painful and burdened with so many costly sacrifices, and ceremonies besides.

Then, the assigning them the land of Canaan (possessed by the first Patriarchs, for a short time), fixed their affections and longings after it, that they might not defile themselves with other nations, or be dispersed among them. And so strongly were they assured of it to their posterity, as that they would never be other than sojourners in other places, wherever they came, all their lives long. Hence, such as died in Egypt during this tedious interval took care that their bones might be transported to the Land of Promise, when God was pleased to deliver them, both to manifest their faith, and to oblige their posterity to set their hearts and expectations upon it; teaching us Christians how we ought to set our affections on the heavenly Canaan, looking on this world but as a transitory passage to a better. And that that country (full of notorious sinners, the seven nations whom God had cast out) should not pervert His chosen people, He ordered their utter extermination; such as out of indulgence they spared,

becoming snares and perpetual mischief to them: as do likewise all those darling sins of ours, which, as so many *Canaanites*, we spare, and do not utterly extirpate.

The Tabernacle first, and afterwards the Temple, which God would have the centre of His service and material oblations, was fixed and confined to a certain place, that His people might not wander and stray from the true religion and the place where the Messiah was to be born. In a word, it was for this that the Law itself was also such as obliged the Jews to such an aversion to all other nations, as to look on them with contempt and abhorrence; and the like detestation had the Heathen for the Jews, seeing them sacrifice divers animals which the Gentiles worshipped and esteemed as gods; and that they, on the contrary, used to eat swine's flesh and other things the most abominable to them. So that the exterior purity of the body, prescribed by the Levitical Law, prohibited them all manner of converse with other people, whom they looked upon as profane. Nor was this all; for God did also separate one whole tribe from all their brethren, namely, that of Judah, out of which the oracle, pronounced by their grandfather Jacob, foretold the sceptre should not depart, nor the Law given from between his feet, till Shiloh, that is the Messiah, (as the Chaldee, &c., expounds it) should come, who should no longer separate, but gather all nations into one.

Lastly, out of this royal tribe a peculiar family was set apart, namely, that of David, upon whose throne He promised his posterity should sit for ever and ever; which had been evidently false, were it not accomplished

in Christ, the Prince of everlasting peace, of whose kingdom there is no end.

These and the like were God's designs for the bringing about man's redemption, according to His Divine and secret purpose; but which He thought not good to execute at once, but by types and figures, and by gradual preparation, discovering some by glimpses to particular and favoured persons only, such as the holy Patriarchs—Adam, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Isaiah, Daniel, and other of the Prophets, whereof some were harbingers and forerunners; though all this while involved in types, and mostly in shadows, which, as the Sun of Righteousness approached, so they by degrees dispersed. For, as we have shown, they had all respect to the times of the Gospel, and even unto ours, upon whom the ends of the world are come. They were wrapped in clouds, not only to conciliate our greater reverence, but to exercise our understanding and diligence; to stir up our devotion, render us humble, incite us to study and search the Scriptures, and, perhaps, were as necessary to bring about His great design; since, had men known what the events would have been, the Apostle tells us,[1] they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory.

It was expedient, therefore (as God had before determined), at that time to conceal his purpose, that so many things should be shaded under types and symbols, to be hereafter explained and accomplished. We find divers high and glorious things veiled under figures, and mystically described by the Prophets, attributed to

[1] Acts, iii., 17.

the reign of Christ, which never happen to the Jewish Church, or to those holy men according to the letter. David speaks many things of himself, which were never accomplished in his days, and these St. Peter interprets very plainly.[1] Nay, the Jews themselves were not ignorant of it, and, therefore, were so studious of the hidden sense of Scripture, as carried them to excess in their laborious critiques.

The *brazen Serpent*, the persecutions of David and other holy men, were types of our Blessed Saviour's sufferings; Solomon of His spiritual kingdom and glory; and those remarkable chapters of Isaiah[2] show us, as in a table, all the famous passages of His whole life and passion, and issue of it. To this add those plentiful passages sprinkled through all the Psalter, &c. For thus it is written, and thus it ought to be, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled, and that He might be the exemplar of holiness, charity, meekness, and all other divine virtues, which He could not have shown, had He been born great, high, and rich in worldly circumstances. The more poor and mean He appeared, the more wonderful and illustrious His might, works, and miracles. Besides, He was to expiate by His sufferings for our sins, to intercede for us, to bless us, and all to secure our faith and salvation.

Nor by these events alone did God prepare the Jews to embrace the true Messiah, but by imposing the heavy yoke of the Law, burdened with innumerable ceremonies, busy and chargeable; that, groaning under

[1] Acts, ii., 27.

[2] Isai., viii., 14; l., 6; lii., liii.; Dan., ix.; Zech., ix., xii.

a pressure which neither they nor their fathers were able to endure (as under sin, for the Law came in because of sin), they might long for Him, who, by fulfilling that Law at once, should break their ponderous yoke, and change it into a Law of liberty, to that of Christ, whose yoke is easy and burden light, and exercise their thoughts and minds about those important and sublime mysteries, whereof those busy ceremonies were but types and shadows. The former dispensation had nothing greater than carnal motives, temporal and fading blessings, which could never satisfy the souls of men designed for immortality and a more noble state, as is plain from several passages of Holy Scripture, especially the Psalms of David and the Prophets, the nearer they approached the dawning of that day, when this Star, or rather Sun of Righteousness, was to rise.

Thus, we are led to behold the infinite wisdom of Almighty God through all this dark economy. In the mean time, as to that inquiry how their forefathers were saved, and what the Patriarchal faith was, before and since the Mosaical institution (an account whereof I have already partly given), we may not suppose that either they or the Jews were obliged to believe every article of the Christian faith, as that the Messiah was to be born of the Virgin Mary, or suffer under Pontius Pilate, be crucified, die, be buried, descend to Hades, rise the third day, &c. Nor was all this creed believed at first by our Saviour's own disciples, till He had run through all these periods, and was actually risen from his grave. Nor understood they the mystery of the Sacred Trinity as we do, and many other recondite

secrets. But a more general belief in the Messiah was accepted, without a full knowledge of His Divine office. They were (as we have shown), all this while, under the schoolmaster, clouded with types and figures, so that even the Apostles, when they came to know that He was the Christ, were for a time forbidden to divulge it; because the grand evidences of His calling and high character, the descent of the Holy Ghost and resurrection, were not yet accomplished; by which His mission and doctrine were evidenced and asserted beyond all possible contradiction.

But though this secret mystery was at first thus clouded, as it pleased God the Father, mindful of His promise to our fathers, a glimmering light was seen, at least, by some more illuminated amongst the holy Patriarchs and Prophets. Abraham, our Saviour tells us, rejoiced to see His day;[1] Jacob, Job, David, the divine and (as a Father calls him) the Evangelical Isaiah, Daniel, John the Baptist, Anna, and the good old Simeon, we may safely reckon among these happy souls. The rest certainly expected some signal Deliverer, though they comprehended not the types; nor haply the Prophets themselves so explicitly, even what they prophesied; nor any else, till their predictions were come to pass. Those mysteries St. Paul tells us not being made known to the ages past.[2] Nor was such explicit faith actually required, farther than what is set down in the Epistle to the Hebrews — faith in God's general promise. Nor seem they, till the Messiah

[1] John, viii., 56. [2] Ephes., iii., 4, 5; Heb., xi.

indeed was come, obliged to any other act of faith for justification, but such an universal belief, one time or other, without any intuitive cognizance of circumstances, as is required of Christians. And though, unless Christ had come and suffered according to the Scriptures, no flesh could have been saved, because all sacrificial rites and ceremonies, with all their best services, were imperfect and faulty, and, consequently, unacceptable without Christ, who, by fulfilling the Law, accomplished all; yet they knew it not, or very darkly; whereas, since the Gospel shone, we have a full, explicit, and distinct faith in our Messiah and all its mysteries, containing the substance of all those types and shadows, which were to have their completion when this Propitiatory had finished His mission.

Repentance yet was, doubtless, required of all, as well as faith. This is evident through all the Scripture; the exhortations to it we have in all the Prophets. And the beholding so many innocent creatures daily immolated and dying for their trespasses, as every sacrifice for sin presented them, could not but intimate to them what themselves deserved: though, perhaps, they might not so distinctly apply all this to the sacrifice and merits of Christ yet to come; whilst so they were reputed in the mind and purpose of God (for else, they must for ever have been abominable, and no delight to Him, namely, those bloody offerings, who looked upon a broken and contrite heart above all those costly ceremonies); and, though natural religion, reason, and God's aspectable works, easily lead men to acknowledge

and revere a Deity, and many to live virtuously, yet even the very wisest and deepest of them could never guess at the method by which God would bring them to salvation. In the covenant of works, God required of every soul entire obedience to the Law, which, perfectly observed, had, doubtless, justified the person; but, finding him altogether unable to come up to that, He graciously entered into a second Covenant of Grace, requiring only faith in God the Father and His promises for the redemption of the world; till Christ should come and be incarnate, which qualified Him to finish what we could not attain. Nor this by any inherent dignity properly in our faith or any other virtues, but through the benevolence and mercy of Almighty God; so that we are justified by his free grace alone, imputing the act of faith, working by love, to us for righteousness, instead of all other legal and ceremonial works.

This act of faith is the true and genuine cause of justification and salvation, above all other theological virtues. Not (as we said) from any dignity or excellency of the act itself (which God might have assigned and placed as well in charity or hope), but from His own beneficence and holy will that so it should be; and that faith might have this honour and effect; the Holy Ghost, as it were, mercifully condescending to bind even Himself to the very words and syllables, namely, the imputing our faith for justification, rightly applied, to our inexpressible and eternal consolation. And now, how far the same did operate for the faithful before our

Blessed Saviour's Incarnation, may piously and reasonably be conjectured.

SECTION III.

THAT JESUS CHRIST WAS THE TRUE MESSIAH; PROVED,

I. BY FULFILLED PROPHECY.

We now come to prove that the true Messiah, Christ, or the Anointed, is come—He, namely, whom the Jews long expected, and upon whom we Christians especially place all our confidence, and the religion and faith we profess relies. And that this Messiah is truly God and Man by mysterious Incarnation, and thereby qualified to accomplish the great work of that redemption which no religion else could effect, no other name being under heaven by which we could be saved, is the next and most important truth we have to clear.

There were seven things, the Talmudists say, which were ordained before the world:—1, the Law; 2, Repentance; 3, Paradise; 4, Hell; 5, Heaven; 6, the Sanctuary; and 7, the Messiah.

As to the name *Christ*, or *Messiah*, both siginifying the Anointed, it is a name, office, and dignity, and of persons set apart for some eminent calling, and, therefore, inaugurated with the same ceremony. So Kings, Princes, Prophets, Priests were anointed after the manner of the Eastern countries, with a sweet, balsamic exudation, or odoriferous composition, and did signify, from its spreading nature, the diffusiveness of grace and goodness. Whence that of the Spouse—*Thy name*

is as ointment poured forth.[1] Our Blessed Saviour was thus anointed in all the capacities of the Messiah, Priest, Prophet, King; so as never any other was before Him.

That the Messiah should appear about this time, was the universal expectation; and there were prophecies of it, not only among the Jews, but even the Gentiles.[2]

First, then, from Scripture prophecies, in a line from Adam, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Job, David,[3] it is abundantly evident that such a person was to come; not, as some later Jews still believe, to be a temporal deliverer, but a spiritual and eternal. By Jacob's prediction of the Shiloh, by Balaam's Star,[4] by that of the Magi, by the Sceptre's departure from Judah, this must be the true Messiah; for from thence to the Incarnation it remained in that family, that tribe still ruling even during all the time of the captivity, and afterwards when under the Romans themselves they had a sort of Commonwealth, and, in some cases, liberty to punish capitally.[5] Zerubbabel was also of that tribe, and other captains and governors under the Persian, with great authority. But no sooner was He really come, or, at least, a little after His Passion, than at once the Jews lost not only all their own particular government, but

[1] Cant., i., 2.

[2] Cicero gives many hints of it in his epistle to Lentulus, and in his book, De Republicâ; Virgil in his fourth eclogue, though, to flatter Augustus, misapplied.

[3] Gen., iii., 15; xviii., 18; xlix., 10; Deut., xviii., 15, 18; Job., xix., 25; Ps. cx., 4.

[4] Numb., xxiv., 17.

[5] See all this made out by Eusebius, l. viii., De Dem. Evang., and Hist. Eccles., l. i., c. 6.

all the marks of all government whatsoever, living without law, prince, dwelling, country, possession, title, tribute, or the least mark of a people under any regiment or polity; nay, and they had lost their very books of genealogy, and were so disordered and scattered, that they despaired of their re-establishment. Their Temple was destroyed, their altars demolished, their city burnt and sacked, their priesthood abolished, &c. Add to this the completion of the prophecies.[1] That the glory of the second, though much inferior Temple for outward magnificence and cost, should be greater than that of the first; as it accordingly was, by the presence of our Blessed Saviour, the desire of all nations. Born as He was about the latter end of Augustus's reign, when all the world was in peace, the temple of Janus shut, the Roman empire now in its most flourishing state, and the earth under one prince, as never was there a time so fit for the Prince of Peace, and the spreading of the Gospel of Peace without interruption.

That the Jews were in great expectation appears from the fact, that no sooner did the Magi come to worship, than the whole Sanhedrim was consulted by Herod, who, jealous of his lately acquired authority, was so fearful lest the child should escape him, who he thought might live to supplant him, that he caused his own son to be murdered.[2] Tacitus and Suetonius report

[1] Haggai, ii., 7.

[2] This being told to Augustus, he is reported to have said, *Melius est Herodis porcum esse, quàm filium.* Macrob. Saturn., l. v., c. 4.

that the Jews were so impatient of the delay of his appearing, that it incited them to a rebellion, and how they flattered Vespasian with their opinion of his being the person, because he was a great and powerful prince, such a one as they dreamt of. But it could not be the body of the Jews who entertained this fancy, because the Messiah they expected was to deliver them from the Romans, and subdue the whole world to their law. And, indeed, this was the fulness of time; the sceptre, as we showed, was departed, it being punctually also at the expiration of Daniel's *weeks*,[1] an unanswerable prophecy, where is foretold the Messiah's cutting off from the people, but not for Himself, the Anointed being slain, the ceasing of the daily oblation and legal rites, the durability of His kingdom, in which the saints should reign; the ruin of the four monarchies figured by gold, silver, brass, and mixed iron.

All these fulfilled, are most convincing proofs.[2] It was now, also, that the Jewish religion was more than ever spread about the world by an accession of the Gentiles, and so prepared to entertain the Gospel in the fulness of time, and that the Roman Empire was in its highest *acme* of learning, eloquence, wit, pomp, and magnificence.

Appeal we to the Rabbins. They all expound Jacob's prediction to that of Christ, whose era was to be at the ceasing of their magistracy. Nor is there at present one

[1] Dan., ix., 24.

[2] These particulars see at large in the often cited Euseb., l. vi., c. 8. De Demonst. Evang.

Jew, who pretends to be of that ruling tribe,[1] so vigilant was Herod and the Roman Emperors to extirpate it, our Saviour being the very last who could have any pretence, being born in the reign of that tyrant, who was the first usurping stranger. Besides, many of their ancient doctors, weary of expecting, and convinced by innumerable arguments, confess He is already come, more than a thousand years since, though they know not where to find Him, but that He is hidden for their sins. The seventy *weeks* of Daniel, to the rebuilding of the demolished Temple, (according to all calculation) amounted to 483 years, namely, from the first of Cyrus, to Herod and Tiberius; so that, as the prophet Jeremiah writes to the captivity, that in seventy years they should return from their *temporal* captivity, so in just as many weeks of years they should also from their *spiritual*.[2] And this, with the rest, has been so closely urged, that they have no other subterfuge but that of the prophets being mistaken, whilst the more ingenuous affirmed their Messiah should come about the four thousandth year from the Creation.

The old Talmud of Rabbi Elias is express; and they are now so lamentably tired with attendance, as to acknowledge it vain to trouble themselves any longer about it. To this may be added an universal tradition

[1] As is fully and largely made out by Euseb. De Demonst. Evang., l. viii., 1, 22, explaining the ixth of Daniel.

[2] Their doctor, Nehemias, living fifty years before Christ, confidently averred that it could not be above fifty years before what Daniel so predicted would come to pass.

amongst them, that the true Messiah was then to appear when their whole nation was the most depraved, and wickedness abounded amongst them;[1] and that then they were so, Josephus[2] sufficiently sets forth, and even to that height of wickedness, that he tells us, they were worse than impious Sodom.

That the Romans never showed so great cruelty as against this perfidious people, may be reckoned an instance of the Divine displeasure for their rejecting their Saviour, who, to testify His mission, had done such wonders among them, that had they not been the most wilful and obstinate, they must have acknowledged Him the Messiah. As to the rest of those texts objected by the Jews, as the cleaving of Mount Olivet, the planing of ways, the exaltation of Jerusalem, and the like, besides that they are all verified in Christ, their own learned Maimonides[3] says expressly, they are parabolical and figurative.

The historians[4] we mentioned tell us of a report about that time, of an universal Monarch to be born in Jewry; and Josephus says there was a public inscription of it there in the market-place. This, with other predictions, so possessed the people, that they were disposed to rise upon every occasion, as they did with Judas the Gaulonite, Theudas, and other impostors, those arch levellers, who were all dispersed. Nor is the

[1] Zech., xiii.

[2] Joseph. Antiq., l. xx., c. 6, and De Bello Jud., l. i., c. 15.

[3] In Deuter.

[4] [Tacitus, Hist., l. v., 9-13. Suetonius Vespasian, c. 4-8.]

general and sudden silence of their own prophets to be passed by; their early and earnest looking for Him, by their questioning John the Baptist, &c. One Theodosius, a Jew, avows that in a certain record he had seen a short account of the miraculous conception of Christ, in which His Divinity was asserted, and His divine person registered among the priests by the name of Jesus, son of the Living God, and of Mary the Virgin. And Rabbi Hacodoch long since is said to have foretold, that His mother's name should be Mary, and spake of Bethlehem, and other circumstances of His birth. Rabbi Ula, from the ninth of Isaiah, confesses that JESUS of Nazareth (for so he styles Him) was crucified the day before the Passover. This, of necessity, must be on our *Good Friday*, and adds that He was, though very poor, of royal extraction, and that the disciples of *Hillel* should see Him, owning old Simeon for one of the chief amongst them.[1]

Another proof of the Messiah being come, may be gathered from Isaiah,[2] where we have His life and passion so graphically expressed, as if we saw it before our eyes, but especially in the twenty-second Psalm, so that not one accident or circumstance, to a tittle, no, not to the tasting of a little vinegar, but is punctually mentioned and repeated. We have there His being nailed

[1] Josephus, who yet describes His person, was not to write more, having already been one of the flatterers of Vespasian. For my part, as to that famous passage, where he describes our Blessed Saviour, I know not why we should not as soon raze out any period of that excellent History.

[2] Isa., liii.

to the Cross, piercing, revilings and blasphemies against Him; His sorrowful exclamation, the parting of His vesture, His death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and His leading captivity captive, &c. The descent of the Holy Ghost, too, is prophecied by Joel, the vocation and coalition of the Gentiles.

Nor is it to be passed by, the endeavour of Tiberius to have Him enrolled into the number of the Gods, who was God and Man; His very name, half Hebrew and half Greek, showing both Jew and Gentile were to have an interest in Him. And His Deity was asserted by the silencing of their oracles after the demons had confessed Him, at which Porphyry was not a little perplexed, it happening so near his birth. Augustus, likewise, even before His advent, is said to have erected an altar, *Primogenito Dei.* I pass by the acknowledgment of the aforementioned apostate,[1] that the Christians were the cause of the improsperity of their gods. Wherefore most semblable is that of Tertullian, where he challenges any of their false deities, and speaks of their being ordinarily in his time forced to confess Christ, their impotence of doing any feats where the holy Babylus was buried, and how their demons and all other Pagan conjurers were put out of countenance in the presence of any Christian. Never could any of their necromancers raise our Lord, or so much as His phantom. Hecadoch, a great rabbi, calls Christ the spiritual King.[2] But the most remarkable is what

[1] Porphyry.

[2] So also Rabbi Misdrach, upon the Psalms and other Scriptures.

Philo says upon it, that the birth of the Messiah should not be after the manner of other men. Hadarsan calls Him the *Bud*, not by carnal generation, as Zecharius [1] the *Branch*.[2]

Further, He was to be of the family of David,[3] (prefigured in Solomon, that happy, great, wise, and peaceable prince) of invincible power, reigning over souls, and by His doctrine subduing the world with spiritual weapons; never prince so rewarding his subjects. And that He was to be such a King, was shown, not only by the coming in of the kings of the earth and submitting their sceptre to His Cross, but in what we noted of the overthrow of the kingdom of Satan, in the silence of his oracles, demolition of his places of worship, overthrowing and breaking down their costly statues, and the unclean spirits ejected.

Of His being born at Bethlehem,[4] besides what was predicted, it appeared by the *Censual Tables* mentioned by Justin Martyr, as then extant, St. Cyprian, Tertullian, and others. That He was to be the Son of God,[5] was confessed by John the Baptist, by Nathaniel, Martha, Peter, and the rest, and by the expectation of the Jews themselves, as is plain by the High Priest's

[1] Zech., vii., 12.

[2] See the learned Huetius in his *Evangelical Demonstration*, and the parallel texts he has so laboriously collated, of all that God spake to the holy prophets since the world began, to perform the mercy promised to our forefathers, and to remember His holy Covenant.

[3] Jer., xxiii., 5. [4] Micah, v., 2. [5] Ps. ii., 7, 12.

question.[1] That He was to be born of a Virgin, was no less acknowledged, nor did any of his adversaries gainsay it; nay, attested by an angel.[2] That yet, for all this, He should appear in a mean garb,[3] innumerable Scriptures tells us, which made the lofty Jews despise Him, as expecting a pompous, worldly Prince; and therefore they called Him a blasphemer, for assuming that high dignity. Nay, the Apostles themselves were exceedingly possessed with this fancy, every moment expecting when He should begin His reign, so as to confound all the Roman power, and restore the kingdom of the Jews. And some of them ambitiously sought to be especial favourites, as the sons of Zebedee's children, insomuch as this seems to have been the greatest stumbling-block why the Jews did not believe in Him, for all His mighty works and holy doctrine, though the contrary was plainly enough foretold.[4] And how He made good His character for the office He was pleased to perform, satisfying His Father for us by His perfect righteousness and unsinning obedience, the New Testament is full from one end to the other.

Indeed, never was any creature so patient, mild, humble, merciful, gentle, and disposed to do good. He went about continually seeking for opportunities to instruct by His holy doctrine, to give and forgive. So holy, so devout, so temperate, contented, grateful, prudent, wise, loving, and charitable, so as never any was, debonair, peaceable, full of pity, obliging, fami-

[1] Isa., liii., 2; Zech., ix., 9. [2] Ps., xxii., lxix.; Isa., liii.
[3] Matt., xxvi., 63. [4] Luke, i., 30, 31.

liar, and condescending, and accessible even to little children, preaching the Gospel to the poor; and happy they, who were not offended at Him, that is, at those mean and humble circumstances which covered these transcendent excellencies. His doctrine was propounded in a plain and familiar way, yet with a gravity and such substantial and powerful authority, as became a Divine Legislator, and not as the Scribes and Jewish Doctors, whom, at twelve years of age, He posed. His Sermon on the Mount contains the whole duty of man. There it is He gives us the true interpretation of the law, not of the letter, but of the spirit, and containing such joyful tidings as would even transport the hearer. He came to institute a new covenant, which He ratified with His own blood; that those who believed in Him, that is, performed His easy commands by faith and repentance, should have pardon of sins, and partake of His future glory. Of this stipulation, and that we might in no ways doubt of it, innumerable are the Scriptures.[1]

2. BY THE TESTIMONY OF MIRACLES.

We now come from Prophecies to the events and testimony of Miracles, and other witnesses of the Divine Jesus; and of which He did more in three years, shall we say? nay, within the space of three days (as we noted), than were ever done by all the Prophets, who went before.

[1] S. Luke, xxiv., 47; Acts, ii., 38; v., 31; I. Tim., ii., 5; Heb., vii., 24; ix., 15; x., 29, &c.

Never were such exploits performed by any potentate or conqueror of the world, as by the King of both worlds, vanquishing the terror of terrors, Death himself, subduing the powers of Hell and Darkness. And necessary it was it should be so, as He was to bring under, reform, re-edify, and new-make even the high and haughty spirits of both men and devils, and to change the customs of the whole world. In order to this, He was to show Himself first to the Jews, among whom what mighty works showed themselves, the Scriptures show; and such as God only could do, namely, create, as He did, eyes to the man born blind, and raising both Himself and others from the dead; discovering the very secrets of men's hearts, preventing men's thoughts; effecting cures at a distance, and this by a mere word only; foretelling future contingencies; making Himself invisible; not by tricks of *legerdemain*, or lying wonders, or feasible by art, magic, and help of evil spirits (whose kingdom He came to destroy), but by a power inherent in Him. And all of them leading to some good, and helpful to mankind; full of majesty, as pointing the finger of God, and of mighty consequence; and, though supernatural, yet by no means contrary to nature. Nor were they done in a corner, or in blind times, or with any fantastical ceremonies; but gravely, plainly, and solemnly.

The circumstances waiting on His birth were illustrated by an extraordinary phenomenon, a chorus of heavenly angels, besides the Angel of Annunciation; the strange birth of His precursor; visions to Joseph;

voices from Heaven; add to these, the Holy Spirit's resting on Him; His transfiguration; His curbing the tempestuous sea; the turning of water into wine; the multiplying of the loaves and fishes; the healing of innumerable and incurable diseases by a word; the forgiving of sins; for who but God can forgive sins? He knew letters, never having been taught; He told the woman of Samaria all that ever she did; He ejected all kinds of spirits; foretold His own Passion, and all that should happen to Him, even to Peter's denial, and his disciples deserting Him. He foretold the success of his doctrine, the destruction of Jerusalem forty years before it happened; with the miraculous escape and preservation of those Christians who retreated to Pella. He exercised the same omnipotent power over all the elements and things, the sea, winds, earth, plants, animals, and spirits, ejecting of these, not a few, but whole legions. He healed desperate infirmities, not only by His touch and voice, but by his very shadow; Oh, stupendous power! By a word only, without persuasion, He converted an avaricious publican, a wanton Magdalene; the one to leave his usurious bank, the other her sensual pleasure. But so, with one fiat, was the whole universe educed out of nothing; and by a word only were these things effected: He spake, and it was done.

And these things proving Him to be God, must needs assert His Messiah-ship. Nor had he only the testimony of the Holy Scriptures, which are abundantly enough, being the Fountain of Truth, but the testimony of the

very Heathen. Witness the centurion's exclamation, who saw Him crucified, "*Truly, this was the Son of God.*"[1] To this add the account which Pilate gave to the Senate, of the wonders which He did. For the truth of all which Tertullian, Justin Martyr, and others attest, the public Acts remaining at that time, and therefore undeniable.

Whilst He conversed upon earth, neither Tiberius, nor any of those proud emperors, would assume so much as the title of Lord; till afterwards proud Caligula assumed it. For, indeed, Jesus alone was Lord of Lords, the Son of God, the first-begotten of every creature; begotten before all the worlds and times,—the Heir of all things—on earth without a father, in Heaven without a mother.[2]

He is named by an angel the Son of God; and that which is begotten of God must needs be *God;* God manifest in the flesh; Emanuel, God with us, must needs be *Man.*[3] He is the Word which created the worlds; and St. John tells us, that that Word was God, yea, properly and truly: One also with the Father. And, had not God thus come in the likeness of man,

[1] The appearance of the star at His birth is mentioned by Chalcidius; of the defect of the sun at His Passion (the moon being then at the full) by Phlegon and Dionysius; and so the earthquake. And his bitterest enemies, Ceslus, Porphyry, Julian, confess His miracles; yea, and the very Jews themselves, as may be seen in Eusebius, l. ii., 2. Hist. Eccles.

[2] In terrâ sine patre, in cœlis sine matre.—Origen.

[3] As Eusebius does admirably prove in his Evang. Demonstr., l. vii., c. 1.

nay, had He not really been Man, man could never have conversed with Him: nor could He have suffered for man.

Further, He asserted His Mission and Messiah-ship, not only by the Miracles Himself wrought, but by deriving all His power to His Apostles, as they did to others after them;[1] so long as this was necessary for the planting and setting of the Gospel.[2] And some even of those He raised from the dead, and had seen and felt this His mighty power, were surviving till near the reign of Trajan, as is affirmed by Quadratus, in his *Apology* to Adrian. After all, He raised himself, and ascended into Heaven, whence He sent down that Holy Spirit with those miraculous gifts, to enable His disciples to preach His glorious and saving truth over all the world. For those who knew no language but their own, were on a sudden enabled to deliver their message to the most strange and distant nations, every one hearing them speak in their own tongues the wonderful things of God.[3]

Thus this sound went into all the world, even to our British Islands and farthest Indies, as Eusebius tells us.[4] Nor did they accomplish these things and conversions by the power of eloquence, but began most of their Sermons at the ignominious death of their Master, whom they yet affirmed to be alive,—contradictions the most unlikely to gain credit, without a Divine and overcoming power. Who ever had the honour to be so

[1] Matt., x., 8.

[2] Consult Irenæus, l. ii., Tertullian (Apol. 23).

[3] Acts, iv., 31.

[4] De Demonstr. Evang., l. iii., c. 7.

adored, and so believed, and after an execution so infamous and shameful in the eyes of man? And this not in any obscure and inaccessible corner, and among idiots and ignorant people, but at Rome, the capital city of the world; at Athens, the eye of learned Greece; at Antioch, Alexandria, Ephesus, Smyrna, places and cities famous for persons of great name, for their wisdom and sagacity, and where all the wit and learning flourished, in the most learned, flourishing, and polite age that ever was!

They challenged all the world to convict them of forgery, when it was suggested they wrought their miracles by magical arts.[1] But, so far was Christ from working by the power of evil spirits and unlawful arts, that His doctrine utterly destroyed the worship of demons, and all impure rites in which these wild fiends had deluded the world so long. What can be so senseless, as to imagine the devils should assist to their own destruction? Had the *Sanhedrim* skill in magic (as the Jews affirm they had), to be able to discover impostors, they would certainly have done some feats to convince the people of it.[2]

[1] This appears by the several apologies made to the great emperors in those early days, resigning the issue of all they did to the undeniable matter of fact, for at least two ages after their Blessed Lord's Ascension: this is undeniably proved by Justin Martyr, Tertullian, St. Cyprian, Origen, Arnobius, Lactantius, M. Felix, Prudentius; yea, even down to St. Augustine.

[2] This is as true as the Legend of our Blessed Saviour's stealing the *Powerful Name*, which, the Jews say, had been guarded no less than a thousand years in the Temple.

The famous Jupiter, Saturn, and other Heathen deities, confessed themselves no other than foul and abominable spirits, frequently cast out by the only name of Christ; so that Tertullian dares their worshippers to bring any demoniac before a Christian, and they should see him compelling the evil spirit to acknowledge himself a devil; and this upon forfeiture of his life, if it succeeded not. Nay, he names several consular and great courtiers, whom every body knew, miraculously healed. As to the cure pretended to have been done by Vespasian, the physicians all acknowledged, that the blind man brought to him was curable by art; but we find no such among those many to whom our Saviour gave not only sight, but eyes. So healed He the *Hæmorissa*, after she had spent all upon the physicians to no purpose.

The several feats reported to have been done by Apollonius Thyanæus were proved to be wicked impostures, depending only upon the testimony of petulant men, and what was written in the ages after the pretended facts. Their authors, too, received rewards and honours for their legends and books.[1]

As to our Blessed Saviour, and the contemptibleness of the means,—His birth and education, His disciples, poor ignorant fishermen—if any think thereby to defame His miracles, the more it advances our wonder and admiration. If the verity of fact be asked after, and where these mighty deeds were done, the answer is easy. Where the doer of them was born, lived, and

[1] See Huet. Demonst. Evang., c. 147, &c.

died, namely, at Bethlehem, and the famous city Jerusalem, and in that celebrated Temple where He frequently preached. In secret did He nothing, nor in public to be praised of men; but to glorify God, and vindicate His doctrine.

Would you know the time? It was for three whole years; and the same miracles were often iterated, and the effects permanent and durable, and not illustrious for the present moment. As for witnesses, besides not only His own twelve Disciples, plain, honest, and disinterested men, but thousands: nor that once only, but at several times and occasions; nor these in the house alone, but in the city, streets, villages, country, wilderness, by land and sea: and, indeed, where not?

If you inquire after the facts, they were such as were sensible, visible, plainly palpable and easily discerned, without imposing accidents for substance, and qualities for real matter. And, were none of these recorded in the Scriptures, yet were their testimony sufficient at the same time; a famous Church having been there founded at Jerusalem by those Apostles of his, where He had performed so many wonders, taught and suffered.

But, to prevent all defects, divers of these Sacred Books were written then, or immediately after, and that so honestly, and with that ingenuity, as even to the Authors acknowledging their own failings and infirmities, their ignorance, cowardice, incredulity, doubtings, with extraordinary sincerity, which seducers use not to do, nor could they by such means hope to gain proselytes. They attribute nothing to their own

virtue, but utterly disclaim it, giving all the glory to God.[1]

Another argument of infallible proof may be, that most of what our Saviour did was foretold He should do. Above all, the miracle of His Resurrection, without which all His other miracles had been to little purpose, was attested not only by those women, who went to be spectators, or by His disciples only, or by unbelievers (for such was the mass at that time), but was seen alike by five hundred brethren at once.[2]

Lastly, how great and stupendous needs must be that power and virtue, which can give such gifts to men as He did to His servants, empowering others not only to do what be fit, but even so great miracles. For such an effect had the preaching of His Resurrection, that within forty days after it, such multitudes embraced the Faith, as that no fewer than three thousand were converted at one plain Sermon of St. Peter's.[3] Such was the effusion of His Holy Spirit upon those truly gifted men; and by such signs and miracles does St. Paul justify his vocation. Nay, with such energy did this virtue exert itself, that miracles were done, not only by the touch and reliques, but by the very shadow of His Apostles.[4]

But, to return to those of our Blessed Saviour: such they were, as none but the Supreme and Absolute Master and God of Nature could have effected: such as far surpassed the power of material causes, yea, and of any substance separate from matter; as, for in-

[1] Acts, iii., 12; vii., 51; viii., 22, 23.
[2] I. Cor., xv., 6.
[3] Acts, ii., 41.
[4] Acts, v., 15.

stance, the creation of bread in the hands of His disciples who distributed it,—the healing of diseases at a distance, and without topical application,—the doing those things at an instant by a word spoken,—souls to re-enter dead bodies, — subjugating infernal spirits; and then to communicate all this power by breathing only upon His Apostles!

As for what the Pagans and others pretend,—what is their number? what their evidence? What sect or religion have they established by them? And why have those Miracles of Christ so prevailed over them, as even to draw these pretenders over to His party, so as to cause them to burn their most curious and costly books of art.[1] In a word, either, then, those miracles which Christians affirm to have been done, were done, or were not done. If done, there is all the reason in the world to believe them; if not, the miracle is yet the greater, that without a miracle it should so prevail.

But, to proceed to further instances: the veil of the Temple was rent. But how was it possible they should impose an event so remarkable upon so many thousands, writing so confidently, whilst that stately edifice was standing, and while those persons were yet living, who might so easily have contradicted it, namely, more than a hundred thousand witnesses? How should they dare affirm a circumstance so notorious, on purpose to deceive those to whom our Blessed Saviour preached at Jerusalem, with any forehead or colour of hopes to persuade? This alone is unanswerable.

But, supposing there were no other miraculous proof

[1] Acts, xix., 19.

of His Divinity, and the religion He came to promulge, but that single one, His Resurrection, it had been, beyond all contradiction, sufficient; it being the prime Article which justifies His commission. This, therefore, it pleased Almighty God to give us the most unquestionable assurance of, of which any thing past is possibly capable, seeing the fact can but once be done; nor needs it. For, first, the ocular were not (as we said) one or two, but five hundred at once; and several others, at several times, of irreproachable credit, and such as not only saw, but eat, drank, and conversed with him. Such numbers these, as liars do not use to appeal to. Nor is it possible so many should agree in an untruth for no gain, but ruin; no man is wicked for nothing but reproaches.

Now, what imaginable interest could such persons have to spread a lie, and assert it to the very death? Why endure such bonds, imprisonments, stripes, losses, banishments, unspeakable tortures, martyrdoms, and cruel deaths, rather than deny it? The persecution to suppress this doctrine being so raging, that more were found to perish for asserting it, than by all the wars, pestilences, and famines, throughout the then discovered world. Why believe we any history, so much likely to be written out of vainglory, flattery, reward, and which has nothing of the danger and difficulty which these poor men encountered? What should cause so much fondness in people to a poor, despicable, reputed malefactor, ignominiously put to death, and hanged as a slave, on a gibbet; the belief in whom made them ob-

noxious to all manner of contumely and misery, without any prospect or motive of advantage; and that not so much as one single person should ever be brought to confess the imposture? To men of ordinary prudence and vulgar understanding, the very instinct of self-preservation forbids so wild and unaccountable folly, as to seal a notorious untruth with their blood.

Besides, how safe had it been to contradict it, if false, by exposing the dead corpse; for, if He were not risen, He must have still been in the sepulchre, where they might have found and taken Him out; seeing, as for that wretched evasion of His being stolen by the disciple, whilst the watch were asleep, how could men who confessed they were asleep attest it? And how, if awake—how should such poor, mean, unarmed, cowardly men, who ran away from and deserted Him whilst alive, after He had shown them such proofs of His miraculous power, hazard themselves to rescue a corpse, watched by a guard of rude and armed soldiers? Besides, how could they have rolled away so vast and ponderous a stone, sealed and made sure, without making the least bustle or noise? Or how, I say, if all asleep at once, could they affirm so positively what became of Him; or how, indeed, durst they have confessed a thing for which they were sure to be severely punished by their officers? In earnest, the execution of so bold and magnificent an exploit, for these poor creatures to bear away our Saviour's dead body, guarded with such circumstances, and designed to alter and make such a change of religion in the world, of which it had posses-

sion for so many thousands of years, by such unlikely instruments,—as being neither princes, soldiers, politicians, statesmen, philosophers, great wits, or orators; but base, ignorant, poor, and abject persons, renouncing all the world,—were very unlikely. What should give them up to embrace halters, axes, fire, scourges, sword, exile, teeth of wild beasts, hatred, scorn, want in the utmost degree, and to suffer all the rage of the most truculent tyrants, and witty inventions of torments, for nothing but to propagate a lie? See what St. Paul (who was no sot, or ignorant) suffers for the testimony of this Article,—who was before a favourite of the High Priests and of his zealous countrymen! He was bound, imprisoned, scourged, stoned, shipwrecked, dragged from one tribunal to another, and at last beheaded. Methinks, the very remorse and despair of the unhappy Judas, making himself away so shamefully before any persecution happened to him,—whilst St. Paul and the rest rejoiced in their affliction,—were sufficient to convince one. For, had his gracious Master been a deceiver, would that miserable creature have taken it so to heart, to have betrayed Him, and not rather have gloried in it?

And can we imagine that Sergius, governor of Cyprus, Dionysius the Areopagite, Polycarp, Justin, Irenæus, Origen, Tertullian, Clemens Alexandrinus, Cyprian, and multitudes of the most learned, prudent, and sober persons at that time, educated in the Pagan religion from their childhood, would, against all hopes of worldly interests, and to the peril and loss of all they

had, embrace Christianity, to worship One, who died so ignominious a death, unless, upon the most accurate inquiry possible to be made, they had found all to be true reported of Him? But, in a word, the testimony of His miracles was so evident, that neither Celsus, nor Julian, nor even the Jews themselves,—such as still adhered to the Mosaic Law,—could not but acknowledge Christ a Teacher sent from Heaven.

Wherefore, these instances are so absolutely unanswerable, that, had they not been asserted by those who saw them[1] with their eyes, the disciples and all the rest must have exceeded all the madmen and fools that ever were, to broach a fiction with so much peril to themselves, and for no manner of end.

To conclude this of the Resurrection: how great a miracle yet is it, that more men should be converted without them than with them! For, even of those who beheld with their own eyes the daily wonders He wrought, how few believed on him! Hindered by their ambition, love of riches, lust, pleasure, and cares of this world, which the austerities of the Christian Doctrine denounced. So that, even after the Parable of *Dives* and *Lazarus*, in which the sensual glutton would persuade Abraham how effectual a preacher one raised and sent from the dead would prove, yet was that great miracle so slighted, that on the very day in which our Blessed Saviour resuscitated Lazarus from the grave, the spectators of it immediately sought how to put both the raiser and raised to death again.

[1] I. John, i., 1.

Let us here take notice, that the Life of our Blessed Saviour was not written by Himself (to avoid suspicion, nor in his life-time), but by others, yet by eye-witnesses, recording even their Master's bodily infirmities, hunger, thirst, lassitude, pain, pity, tears, want, receiving alms and help from others; in a word, subject to like passions, sin only excepted. Let us also consider His infinite caution, lest even his disciples, and those who were empowered to do such wonders, as to make even the spirits subject to them, should pride themselves; He bid them to rejoice not so much in these gifts and miracles, as in those spiritual gifts which make less appearance in the world and in the eyes of men; so that the woman who pronounced her so happy, that bare and gave him suck, could not at all gratify the least vanity in Him. They were blessed in His esteem, who heard and obeyed the Word of God, and whose names were written in Heaven; who were poor in spirit; who left all to follow Him.

To all these miracles we might add the wonderful and stupendous accession of people to the Church, in so short a time, with the effects and successes of the Holy Gospel on the lives of evil men, now and ever since converted to the Faith, and made heirs of life, subduing all the powers of the Devil, and the world which he had seduced, and which was so long rooted in ignorance and superstition, without other arms or artillery, than self-denial, humility, charity, patience, courage, and sufferings of their teachers. And that without human learning and studied eloquence; but by

the plain and honest endeavour of a few poor, despised fishermen, the most unlikely instruments to effect so strange and prodigious an alteration in the world, among scholars, princes, soldiers, the strongest, the wisest, craftiest, as well as the most vicious,—by a doctrine so averse from the corruptions of sinful men, as crucifying the flesh, pulling out the right eye, cutting off the right hand,—yet all this was done by these weak and despicable men, even to the pulling down of strongholds, and of every thing which advanced itself against the design of the Gospel.

I might farther insist on the miraculous Descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles, prophesied by Joel, which was not without such a cloud of witnesses, as comprehended people of all nations of the known and then discovered world, with its prodigious effects, as also of the splendid union of the Gentiles; with other wonderful passages of our Blessed Saviour's life; because they will many of them yet appear by the stupendous progress which His Holy Doctrine made. To which, as a miracle, comprehending nothing else but miracles, I now hasten.

3. BY THE WONDERFUL PROGRESS OF THE GOSPEL.

Another mighty proof is the extraordinary progress which the Christian religion has made, in all places and countries, from so small and despicable a beginning, and in so short a time. To how goodly a stature this little infant is grown!

But to take our rise from its infancy: our Blessed Lord, till about the age of thirty years,[1] living a mean and humble life among his parents, and, as some affirm, working with His reputed father (who was a carpenter), making ploughs, and other necessary instruments of husbandry (as He who was hereafter to subact and cultivate the world), took not on him His public character till His baptism. After this, He went about preaching and interpreting the Moral Law, vindicating it from the false glosses and additions, which, in tract of time, corrupt and superstitious men had put upon it; and so, by degrees, insinuating the defects of the Mosaic Dispensation, to be completed in a better law, which He came to teach—proposing faith in Him and His mediatorship to be the way to eternal life. All these He confirms by wonderful miracles, convincing the gainsayers by the Scripture and prophecies which went before, and spake of Him. And this did He first in Galilee of the Gentiles, showing thereby (as Eusebius well notes) the calling of those ignorant nations; for which He so oft is found to converse among the Samaritans, and about the coast of Tyre and Sidon; so that, in a little time, His fame and doctrine spread as far as all Syria, nay, and beyond the Euphrates.

During this time, He had called and instructed twelve persons to be His disciples and apostles, endowed with fitting gifts to preach and propagate what He began. After three years spent in this ministry, about the

[1] The history of the life of Christ, His pre-existence and Divinity, we have in Euseb. Hist. Eccles., l. 1, c. 2, &c.

country, He went to Jerusalem, celebrated the Passover with His Apostles, and turned it into the Christian communion, as a perpetual memorial of His future Passion, and the seal of the Evangelical Covenant which He came to make.

Being hated by the Chief Priests, Scribes, and Pharisees, whose covetousness, oppression, and false doctrine, He had severely perstringed, they corrupted one of His disciples to betray Him. He suffered Himself to be taken, and, by malicious and perjured men, suborned to witness against Him, was arraigned as a malefactor, though the most innocent and harmless person that ever appeared upon the earth, even by the suffrage of the Judge before whom the implacable Jews accuse Him, and extort His condemnation to a shameful and painful death. After which, being miraculously raised from the grave, as He had foretold, He appeared alive, conversing again with His disciples no less than forty days. After which, having empowered His Apostles to plant His Gospel, and successors to govern His Church to the end of the world, He visibly ascended into heaven before them; and is there set down at the right hand of His Father; all things being put in subjection under Him; and where He is to be a glorified Mediator, till his coming to judge the world at the last day.

But the malice of the Jews stopped not here. St. Stephen's martyrdom, a zealous proselyte of the Apostles, and the persecution managed by Saul (afterwards a chosen vessel of Christ), dispersing the Church, greatly contributed to the propagation of the Gospel.

Nor did the Apostles altogether depart from Jerusalem, till twelve years after their Master's Ascension, (as we learn from Clemens Alexandrinus[1]) when they took their several districts, preaching in all places of the world, wherever they came; the nature of its precepts and sublime doctrine soon making converts of all sorts. Nothing was hid from the light and heat thereof; so that Justin Martyr gives us the account, that in his time, amongst the most uncivilized and barbarous nations, prayers were made in the name of Christ. All other leaders of sects and propagators of new religions being generally confined to particular countries, this new doctrine was found spread in all parts and places. And that, whereas all other religions and opinions of philosophers, not countenanced by the authorities, came to nothing, the Christian took root and prospered the more it was persecuted and oppressed. It prevailed against the strictest edicts of the emperors, vigilance of officers, arguments of sophists, and so crowded all places, that, as Tertullian affirms, should the Christians but of *his* early times have withdrawn themselves, the Roman empire, so abounding in people, would have remained a solitude, and been depopulated. It spread the faith through that State more in a few years than the conquests that victorious nation had made in so many hundred.[2]

To this add that most ancient sect of the Θεραπεύται in Egypt and other countries described by Philo, who, in

[1] Stromat, l. vi.

[2] See this abundantly proved by Valesius upon Eusebius.

all probability, were no other than a sort of poor Christians, renouncing the world to live in that institution; and were by no means of the Jewish Essenes, as Scaliger pretends.

The history of our Blessed Saviour's miraculous Conception, His Life, Doctrine, Miracles, Crucifixion, Death, Resurrection, Ascension, &c., were incredible as to their stupendous circumstances, and the belief of them so unlikely to prevail by the talk and address of a few ignorant fishermen on so learned and polished a world, so high, curious, and suspicious; and this acted among a people so malicious and jealous; and all this, in the face of His enemies, in the capital city of the nation; that nothing but a Divine assistance could have prevailed. That it should obtain, also, in an age of such professed Atheism and contempt of all religion, a world so given up to luxury, against which the Christian religion severely denounced, is truly wonderful. For never was the Roman empire so depraved; such villanies, injustice, oppression, and all sorts of vice, indulged and patronized, from the time of Julius Cæsar downwards; all ancient faith and Roman gallantry degenerated into craft, injustice, perfidy, lusts, and unheard of vice; against which this religion not only declared, but against the established religions of the whole world; yea, even against the Jewish, which had now been in possession (and that from God Himself) above two thousand years. All these it taught to extirpate and abolish as obsolete; so that nothing but the doing of miracles and wonders, greater than those of

Moses, or any pretended of the Heathen deities, could possibly have made any impression to the contrary.

Never was religion yet introduced with such contradiction, opposed with such spite by Jews and devils. The rulers took counsel to destroy the Blessed Author of it: Caiphas, John, Alexander, and the whole kindred of the High Priest, prohibiting the very mention of the name of Christ. They stoned Stephen, hauled the believers to prison. The Gentiles, chief men of the city, honourable women, and very craftsmen, were stirred up against the Apostles; whilst thousands of holy martyrs sealed the doctrine with their blood.[1]

Tertullian, reckoning up the several nations who embraced the Christian religion in his early days, names Sarmatians, Scythians, Indians, our Britain, and the Seræ, inhabiting the utmost corners of the earth, planted by these Apostles and Apostolic men with all imaginable hazard of their lives, during that rage of no less than ten persecutions of the most powerful emperors. Of these, the monster Nero was the beginner, about the sixty-fourth year of our Lord; when, setting the city of Rome on fire to oblige the people to build after a more magnificent form, by laying the fact on the poor Christians, he caused thousands to be murdered; Peter and Paul among the rest.

Under Domitian was the second;[2] the third, by

[1] For the sufferings of the Apostles and primitive Christians, and the miserable end of their persecutors, as Pilate, Herod, &c., see Euseb., l. 2, 3, 4, &c.

[2] A.D. 81.

Trajan,[1] who, though an excellent prince, had yet been enraged against the Christians, by the instigation of wicked men; whilst the younger Pliny, Governor and Proprætor of Pontus and Bithynia, gives him an account of their innocency, which procured them some relaxation. He acquaints the Emperor that the main of their error was, their assembling together at a certain stated day, where, early in the morning, they sang certain hymns to one Christ, as the God they worshipped; obliging themselves by oath to commit no wickedness, to abstain from adultery, theft; to keep faith inviolably, and to restore whatever was concredited to them; and, so departing, to meet again at a common meal of simple food, &c. Behold the heavy crimes laid against the innocent souls!

The fourth and fifth persecution was under Adrian[2] and Antoninus Pius;[3] learned and virtuous emperors, but possessed with the vulgar superstition, and fond of the ancient Heathen rites, which they found very much deserted. The temples and altars being almost forsaken, set the superstitious and crafty priests against them in all places, killing and tormenting persons of all sexes and ages; as the particulars are recorded by Eusebius, enough to melt a heart of iron. They were flayed, broiled, burnt, exposed to wild beasts, wearying their very tormentors with their patience and constancy; till, by the prayers of some Christian soldiers of that Prince's army obtaining a victory over the Quadi and Marcomani, by the extraordinary aid of thunder and

[1] A.D. 106. [2] A.D. 118. [3] A.D. 140.

lightning, they obtained some favour, and were afterwards known by the name of the *Thundering Legion.*

In the year [A.D.] 193 began that under Severus, when many noble martyrs perished. Then came Maximinus,[1] the seventh tyrant, a bloody butcher. The eighth was Decius,[2] yet more cruel, if possible. He tore their flesh with red-hot pincers; divers he impaled. It was in his time that Paul, a youth but of sixteen years, fled into Egypt, where he lived in a solitary cave to the age of one hundred and thirteen years.

The ninth persecution[3] was under Gallus and Valerianus,[4] in whose time no fewer than three hundred poor Christians, rather than do sacrifice to the idols, were sacrificed in a burning lime-pit. And so vehement was the zeal of others, seeing so many innocents suffer for the faith, that divers, professing that faith, voluntarily confessed it before the President and Governor; and, accordingly, were put to cruel death.

The tenth and last notorious Heathen persecution was under Dioclesian and Maximianus;[5] of which Eusebius gives a full relation, living himself in that time. There you will find how they were scourged to death, their flesh raked off with potsherds, some were crucified, some thrown to the lions, quartered and pulled to pieces by being scalded in boiling oil or lead. Under these suffered the famous Theban legion at *Octodurus*, in France, where the gallant men, who had so bravely fought and behaved themselves upon all

[1] A.D. 235. [2] A.D. 250. [3] A.D. 250.
[4] A.D. 257. [5] A.D. 300.

occasions, willingly resigned both their arms and lives, rather than do sacrifice or throw a grain of incense on the idol altar. Thousands of Christians, likewise, employed to build those enormous structures, magnificent baths, whose ruins are still extant at Rome, were all martyrized so soon as they had finished the work.

Thus, from Nero downwards, even to the reign of the great Constantine, did Satan muster all his forces against our Blessed Saviour and His followers. The Jews were the informers, going from place to place to raise persecutions against them, eager for the goods and spoils of the holy flock. Yet strove they through all difficulties, imprisonments, chains, gibbets, axes, fire, caldrons, gridirons, hooks, hot pincers, mixtures of fiery oil, teeth of wild beasts. If the Tiber swelled its banks upon any inundation, or the fruits were blasted, *Christianos ad leones*—"The Christians to the lions," was the cry. They lighted the streets in the dark nights, with burning Christians at every door. But neither thus could the old Serpent, seeking to devour the woman and her seed, after above four thousand years' contention for victory, obtain his purpose. The victory is now brought to the crisis, though pretending to such antiquity of possession, universality, and consent of nations; his tyranny and dominion, hitherto supported by laws, fortified by arms, asserted by imposturous wonders and magic arts (the spirits of darkness changing themselves into angels of light), have been overthrown; his arts discovered, legions of devils and devilish men put to flight; their ceremonies abolished,

their oracles silenced. But all this not without a severe struggle on Satan's part. He summoned all his forces, old and young, commanders, soldiers, princes, priests, councillors, judges, senates, ignorant and learned, and employed them to declaim against the cause.[1] They burnt all books and Bibles they could find; suppressed learning; forbade them to teach Christian children letters; used all manner of cunning and stratagem to root the very name of Christian out of the earth; nay, made a law that none should buy or sell, or draw so much as a little water to assuage their thirst, without *Thurification* and offering to the idol. They persecuted the Christians as traitors and sacrilegious persons; and the pro-consuls, and other governors, were directed to hear accusations, condemn, and execute them.

Thus was the Gospel of Peace persecuted, and the Messiah, who came to pacify all enmities, and make the wolf and the lamb, the leopard and the kid, the calf and young lion to lie down and feed together, and the sucking child to play upon the hole of the asp—to be opposed, and as much as in evil men and devils lay, to be utterly extirpated. When, after all this, there were raised up, even from among the Christians themselves, some worthies, who convinced them with their own weapons, not by the spirit of the sword, but by the sword of the spirit, the old serpent, the devil, Satan, who had so long deceived the world, fell like lightning.

[1] Celsus, Porphyry, Hierocles, Symmachus, Libanius, Julian, Lucian, great emperors, commanders, lawyers, and philosophers and wits of the time.

The Christian philosophers and divines[1] confounded the sophists and the wits.

The blood of so many martyrs impregnated the field of the Church, (as it were) never more fertile than when most persecuted. That sharp plough had prepared the glebe to receive the seed with more greediness, so that they were at last convinced it was in vain to fight any longer against heaven. They found that with the great weight they thought to suppress the palm, it did but rise the more triumphantly; and that the Christian philosophy had gotten more scholars and made more proselytes than all the philosophy and institutions of the Greeks had done in so many ages.[2] Lactantius shows that, whilst other criminals roar and cry out hideously when they are under execution, children, old men and young, tender and delicate virgins, endured the tortures without complaint or grievance, some of them singing in the midst of flames, suffering beyond all that they boast of their Regulus and Curtius, one of whom being ashamed to live a perpetual captive, the other, because he could not have escaped, seemed to die bravely; whilst innumerable Christians might, and would not, be delivered from the greatest torments, by flinging a little gum into the fire, or

[1] Justin Martyr, Origen, Apollinaris, Athenagoras, Cyprian, Tertullian, Eusebius, Lactantius, M. Felix, Prudentius, Chrysostom, St. Jerome, St. Augustine, Cyril, and others, against those Heathens we named, and innumerable others, assertors of the Christian doctrine.

[2] See Lactant., five Books of Instit., c. 13.

kissing a silly statue or piece of marble. What could it be but the mighty power of God which should work this prodigious change, give this courage, and the doing of wonders greater than had ever yet been done?

By the end of the first year of the Apostles' preaching, after their Master was ascended, the Gospel was spread throughout all the parts of Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Bythinia, even to Illyricum; and within about half an age this contemptible atom of mustard-seed, scattered by a few illiterate fishermen, (of all other trades and employments the most stupid) grew into such branches, as overshadowed all the known world, even as far as our island, then esteemed the utmost limits of the earth.[1] For so these silly fishermen drew all good and bad into their drag, catching both the Roman emperors and empire itself. And so was fulfilled that of the Prophet: "The potentates of the earth hasted to the light, and kings to the brightness of His rising."[2] So mightily grew the Word of God, and increased.

It can, in my opinion, never be sufficiently admired, that those Pagan rites, owned and professed by the emperors and great men, (jealous of the least innovation) their temples built and adorned with such immense cost, curiosity, and magnificence, such as was that of the Ephesian Diana, should be subverted and rendered desolate by a sort of poor people, strangers, and wandering about the earth; and all this too, in

[1] See Pliny the younger, Epistle to the Emperor Trajan; Tertull. advers. Judæos, c. 2, 8.

[2] Isaiah, lx., 3.

spite of the severest edicts, the zeal and fury of multitudes, the pride and envy of supercilious philosophers, and the avarice of Heathen priests, hating and persecuting this new sect: join to this the spite of the Jew and the diligence of the Gentile, who looked on it as coming to destroy their national religion. These are the most incontrovertible evidences of the truth of its Divine authority. I say, that an upstart institution so totally unassisted by secular power and interest, so repugnant to the vices of the time, education of men, laws, customs, the gallantry and splendour of the world, could not have been so soon embraced but by an over-ruling, omnipotent Disposer and influence, to convert and bend the contradictory and refractory minds of men, so prepossessed with inveterate errors, nor without the evidence of matter-of-fact, convincing the reason of such intelligent persons as it was preached to.

But thus that lofty Statue was broken to pieces by the stone cut out of the mountain, without hands;[1] the polity and force of all worldly monarchs, signified by this enormous Colossus, broken to pieces and demolished. By the preaching of the Gospel, this strong Jericho fell flat at the sound of rams' horns, and nothing was able to stand against it. Then tyrants were humbled, kings cast their crowns and resigned their sceptres at the feet of the crucified Jesus, and all the pomp and glory of Eastern monarchs hearkened to the fishers of Galilee. They were brought to make this notable change in the world by a few poor people, who having

[1] Dan., 2, 45.

neither interest, riches, strength, eloquence, friends, nor credit at home or abroad, were hated, whipped, persecuted, and put to infamous death: yet did they vanquish and bury all this strength, greatness, and glory of the most formidable empire that ever appeared upon earth, in the grave of a crucified Saviour. For the space of 300 years did the Jews and Heathens pursue Christians with all imaginable rage, as despisers of their gods; they raised stories of their killing and devouring their own children, as committers of incest with their mothers and sisters, as worshipping an ass's head, and things more infamous and filthy. All these their diabolical malice invented, to incense the rabble, till those learned apologists, men irreproachable for their virtue and knowledge, and other excellent persons, men of letters and reputation, so opened their eyes, that upon the strictest scrutiny, they could find nothing to charge them with. For let it be no mean argument of the Divine power and favour in the progress of the Christian religion, that it passed through such unheard of contradictions. It was to plant a new religion or doctrine, that would endure no other religion or doctrine but itself, though pleading prescription so many thousand years before it, and under such different and distant princes, interests, laws, and countries—a doctrine so averse and contradictory to corrupted nature, and the prejudices it entertained, as mortifying the flesh, pardoning, nay, loving our most malicious enemies. It condemned not only all actual sins, but evil thoughts, uncleanness of all sorts, and even lusts in

speculation. It forbade polygamy, an inveterate custom; simple fornication, (hardly esteemed a fault) and for faith, it was obliged to believe some things that appeared impossible, namely, the Incarnation, Resurrection, and other mysteries of our holy religion. It enjoined penance, self-abnegation, abstinence, alms.

In sum, no sect of philosophy obliged its votaries to so strict and severe a deportment; and all this, upon the credit of a person who was condemned and hanged as a slave, and of a few obscure followers, who had nothing of this world to countenance and support it. The disciples of this religion were not to stay till it were laid upon them, but to take up the Cross, if need were; to go to prisons, exiles, death; to take the spoiling of their goods cheerfully: strange invitations, one would think, to embrace an opinion, the maintaining whereof should cost its professors deaths and torments insufferable to flesh and blood, even of the most stout and courageous. Did ever any religion thrive upon such a stock, prosper by such a method? Cyrus, Plutarch tells us, inviting men to take up arms, (like Mahomet) promised them all manner of preferments, riches, and pleasures. Here, on the contrary, is nothing but disgrace, poverty, restraint, scorpions, and gibbets, fire and wild beasts; and yet this army of martyrs, this despised colony, went forth and won the field, planted the Cross on the thrones of princes, in spite of all terror and contradiction! Their sound went into all the world; such wisdom in reputed folly; such strength in weakness; such life in death itself!

Constantine having been miraculously converted,[1] and overthrowing Maxentius and Licinius, and the foolish efforts of all their soothsayers and augurs, demolishes the idol temples, abrogates their rites, and converts them to charities and the service of Christ. The oracle at Delphos confesses to Dioclesian himself, that certain righteous persons (meaning the Christians) hindered his responses.[2] He caused the Heathen images to be pulled down and dragged about the streets, to the derision of the people. The famous Apollonian tripos from Delphi, Pan, Venus, and other ridiculous deities, were flung about and dispersed. And thus the cause triumphed till the time of Julian, who, as all those persecuting emperors we named, came to untimely destinies.[3] He thought to have set up the old superstition, used execrable ceremonies, encouraged the Jews to rebuild their ruined Temple at Jerusalem; in which attempt fiery eruptions breaking out of the earth, as they were digging the foundation, burnt and destroyed the workmen. A truth so notorious, that St. Chrysostom makes use of it as a known thing, and happening about his time, as may be seen in his *Oration* to that miserable people. This was that apostate, who prohibited the teaching of letters to Christian children, who

[1] A.D. 300.

[2] See Constantius' letter to Eusebius, about this passage, and of what himself was eye-witness.

[3] Of which Lactantius gives a terrible account in his Treatise, *De mortibus persecutorum*, lately brought to light by the learned Balusius. [Stephen *Beluze*.]

encouraged the learned Jamblicus, Libanius, Maximus, Oribasius, and all the eloquent Pagans of his time, to declaim against the Christians. But all their rhetoric came to nothing; their advocates were foiled. The wretched Julian was slain by an unseen hand in the midst of battle, blaspheming as he died.

This was the last and utmost effort of the perishing Heathen religion and of the power of Satan; for Jovinian, Valentinian, and succeeding emperors, restoring what that miscreant had laboured to disturb, by degrees rooted up the very fibres of the Gentile superstition out of their dominions.[1] But well had it been with the Church had it received all this hardship from the Heathen only; there was yet behind a more terrible conflict and persecution from Christians themselves.

The sum, then, of all is this:—Christ, being the High Priest of our Profession, by God's immediate designation and appointment, our Prince and Saviour, for the propagation and progress of His religion, sent and gave some to be Apostles, some Prophets, and some Evangelists; others to be pastors and teachers,[2] for the perfecting of the saints, work of the ministry, the edifying the body of Christ, till we all should come to the unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God. These, according to their charge and mission, had the gift of

[1] Especially the most religious Theodosius, Gratian his predecessor, and Arcadius, as may be seen by the last of that prince's decrees to Ruffinus, the Prætorian prefect, which gave the fatal and happy blow.

[2] Ephes., iv., 11, 12, 13.

miracles, to heal diseases, dispossess evil spirits, and to plant the Gospel, govern and order the Churches founded by them. Of these our Saviour chose twelve to be Apostles, the word implying a *special Messenger, Ambassador, Proxy,* or *Commissioner.* The number was mysterious, as by divers analogies in Scripture. St. Augustine[1] fancies it relating to the four quarters of the world, three to each, denoting the Holy Trinity, in whose name they were to baptize and proselyte all nations. Tertullian and others resemble them to the twelve precious stones in Aaron's pectoral; to the stones taken out from the river Jordan by Joshua; to the twelve spies sent forth to search the land of Canaan, &c. But to pass these by; they rather seem to some to relate to the twelve Patriarchs of the Tribes; but St. Paul, added to this number, seems to interrupt this conceit; and, therefore, we leave it to the wisdom of God, who does nothing but for weighty reasons, though appearing not to us.

As to our concern; we find them immediately commissioned from our Saviour's very mouth; but they did not execute it so fully whilst their Lord and Master was with them. They baptized, indeed, and preached; but their circle was yet narrow, the time short, and to the Jews their countrymen only. But, after the Partition wall was down, the veil of the Temple rent, especially about A.D. 45, in the reign of Claudius—it was about this period they disposed themselves to preach to all the world, when He endowed them[2] with

[1] Serm. 3, in Ps. 103. [2] John, xx., 21-23.

the same power He himself received from the Father, and then it was unlimited and universal.

This wonderful progress of the Gospel by such unlikely means St. Chrysostom[1] convinces the Gentiles by, above all, the miracles recorded of our Saviour; these being past and invisible, that evident to all in his days. The like demonstration he uses to the Jews, who could not but acknowledge the matter of fact. To this add the spirit of prophecy, now utterly taken from the Jewish Church, and collated on them, when they received the gifts of tongues at Pentecost, as is especially conspicuous in what St. Paul has told us of the latter days and future state of the Church, to the understanding of all mysteries, that knowledge of the difficult places of Scripture (meaning the Old Testament) and expounding of the Word, preferred by St. Paul before the highest of spiritual gifts. And, accordingly, this continued in the Church, as appears by that of Justin Martyr to Trypho, to his age;[2] with ejecting devils, healing diseases, and even the raising of the dead. So Irenæus to the same effect.[3] And as to prophecy and gift of tongues,[4] "*Ipsi audivimus*," says St. Augustine, giving an account of what was performed at Hippo, Carthage, and about his own diocese, noting the very time, persons, places, &c.[5] Would we have more?

[1] Treatise on the Divinity of Christ, c. i. and xi. [2] A.D. 165.

[3] Irenæus, l. xxii., c. 5, 6; Euseb., l. iv., c. 7, &c.

[4] A.D. 410.

[5] Scio ego — cognosco ego — nos interfuimus, neque referre neque enumerare possumus, &c.

Moreover, they had the gift of discerning spirits, whether professors were real, or hypocrites; for our Blessed Saviour had frequently warned of false prophets and pretenders, who should impose upon the credulous. Thus they discovered the fraud of Ananias and Sapphira, Simon Magus, &c.[1]

Then had they, as we said, the gift of languages, absolutely necessary to the work of converting strangers and barbarous nations; together with the interpretation of unknown tongues; the Christian assemblies, at that time, consisting of so many different nations.[2] The power and virtue of healing without knowledge or skill in drugs, or medicinal applications, excepting a little oil, denoting the diffusion of spiritual graces.[3] But this, as Christianity began to spread, and stood in need of no further miraculous attestation, (for miracles are not for those who believe, but to convince infidels) was withheld, or rarely happened, as Christianity took place, and became almost universal, and so not needing it.

Lastly, they had *Virgam Apostolicam*,[4] a special and peculiar power of inflicting corporal punishments upon hypocrites and sinners, for the creating of reverence to their ministry, at this their first setting forth. Witness their animadversions upon Ananias and his wife, Elymas the sorcerer, the incestuous Corinthians, Hymenæus and Alexander, by sudden death, blindness, and excom-

[1] Acts, v., viii. [2] Acts, ii., 9, 10, 11.

[3] This continued till Tertullian's time, who speaks of Proculus having cured the Emperor Severus. [4] I. Cor., iv., 21.

munication, which, in those times, was wont to be accompanied with the Devil's actually possessing and tormenting the person so cut off from the Church.[1] Nor was this discipline other than necessary for that time, when it had no other power to protect and defend religion, and create for it that veneration which was due to so high an ordinance, but these extraordinary gifts; and which they had, also, faculty to derive on others. Yet no others of inferior orders could exercise it, it seeming to be confined to the Apostles alone. Neither was all this done in a hurry, haste, or tumult, but by gentle and sweet degrees. Many things were yet indulged to weak proselytes, not without convulsion to be wholly obliged to leave what had been so radically fixed in them, as prohibition of eating blood, things strangled, circumcision, &c.; some of which were connived at for some time, till they could digest the sound doctrine. So, as it is said, that Christ did decently bury the Jewish religion.

Thus, we have abundantly shown from what beginnings the doctrine and religion instituted by our Blessed Saviour, and substituted in place of that of the Jewish, spread through the whole world, was propagated and brought down to us, which, though but one continued miracle, as it were, yet is no more than necessarily it must have done, when we shall have looked into, and seriously considered the excellency and sublimity of its doctrine.

[1] I. Cor., v., 5.

4. BY THE EXCELLENCY OF ITS DOCTRINE.

PART. I. SUMMARY OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

Now, to what shall we attribute the prevalency of this admirable religion, than (together with, and doubtless above, all we have hitherto produced in this chapter to recommend it) to the transcendent excellency of its doctrine, its design and end to assert its pedigree and Divine original. I say, beyond all; since even miracles do not so much render it credible or eligible, as its admirable precepts and institution. No philosophy, no light of nature, ever showed any thing so perfect as what our Saviour has taught.

Let us see what He has left us in those holy doctrines about preaching and instructing the people.

In that sermon,[1] He teaches and encourages to poverty of spirit and meekness, in opposition to pride and haughtiness, which, being the first and greatest sin, cast the rebellious angels out of heaven.—

He first begins with commanding them to hungering and thirsting after Righteousness.

To Mercifulness.

To Purity of heart.

To be Pacific.

To suffer persecution for Righteousness' sake and the Gospel.

To glorify God by our good example before men.

Not to be causelessly angry, or in any wise revile our brother, but to be of a reconcileable spirit.

Not to look upon a woman, to lust after her.

[1] Matt., v.

To pluck out the offending eye, to cut off the offending hand or foot, or whatever is most dear to us.

To beware of vain swearing and perjury, but perform our oaths and vows; and that our communications may be holy, and so sincere and faithful, that there might be no need of exacting oath at all.

Not to revenge ourselves.

To suffer injury rather than do any; to bear a loss rather than contend for every trifle.

To be charitable, and to give to them who want; to lend *gratis* to those who borrow.

To love our enemies, bless them who curse, do good to them who hate us; and labour for God-like perfection.

To give alms without ostentation.[1]

To pray in private, not to be seen of men, without vain repetitions; but to glorify God's name, that His kingdom may flourish, His will be done.

That we pray, depending on His Providence, to have food and maintenance sufficient for the day, without anxious solicitude, without fear of want; that our sins may be pardoned, as we are ready to forgive others; not to suffer us to fall into temptation, but to deliver us from all evil.

That we fast, not like hypocrites, with sad countenances, to gain opinion of men; but mortify ourselves in secret.

That we lay up treasure in heaven, that our hearts may be there also.

That we be not solicitously anxious for the future; but doing our duty, and, first seeking the kingdom of God, rely on God's Providence.

That we forbear rash judgment,[2] and to be censorious; but rather reform our own selves. That we do not prostitute holy things to the profane.

That we pray with fervency and perseverance.

[1] Matt., vi. [2] Ibid., vii.

That whatever we would men should do to us, we do the like to them, as on this depend both the Law and the Prophets.

That we strive to avoid the broad way and wide gate that leads to destruction.

That we be careful not to be misled by false prophets under the species of holiness, and that they are known by their fruits.

Not to fear those who are able to kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but Him who is able to do both.[1]

To love no earthly relation, in competition with God.

To take up the Cross, and follow Him.

That he who gives a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, shall not lose his reward.

That all manner of sins and blasphemy shall be forgiven but that against the Holy Ghost.[2]

That account shall be given for every idle word, at the day of Judgment; for that which goeth out of the mouth defileth the man.

That except we become as little children,[3] free of malice, humble and innocent, we cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.

That Christ came to save that which was lost; and that it is not the will of our Heavenly Father that any should perish.[4]

That when our brother do a fault, we should admonish him, and forgive him to seventy times seven.

That where two or three are convened in Christian unity and Christ's name, he will be in the midst of them.

That those whom God has joined together in holy matrimony may not be separated, except for fornication.[5]

That none is good but God alone.

That whoever forsakes the enjoyments of this life for His sake, shall be abundantly remunerated in that to come.

[1] St. Matt., x., 28. [2] Ibid., xii., 32-36.
[3] Ibid., xv., 11, 19, 20. [4] Ibid., xviii., 3-7.
[5] Ibid., xix., 9, 17, 20.

That whatever we shall ask in faith in His name, we shall receive.[1]

That we render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsars, and to God the things which are God's.[2]

That he who endures to the end shall be saved.[3]

That what measure we mete, it shall be measured to us.[4]

That not what enters in the body, but those evil thoughts which enter in and come from the heart, pollute the man.[5]

That we should have salt in ourselves, and be at peace with one another.

That those who trust in riches shall hardly be saved.[6]

That we should pray in charity; yea, to sell all, if need require, for the relief of the poor.

That we watch and pray, not knowing when our last hour may be, and the Judgment surprise us.

That He who believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved.

That Christ was anointed to preach the Gospel to the poor, sent to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captive, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised; to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.[7]

That He came, not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

That they were blessed who should not be offended in Him.

That even the hairs of our head are numbered, so great is God's Providence over His elect.

That whosoever shall confess Him before men, him shall the Son of Man confess before the angels of God.

That we should take heed and beware of covetousness; for

[1] St. Matt., xxi., 22. [2] Ibid., xxii., 17. [3] Ibid., xxi., 13.
[4] Mark, iv., 24. [5] Ibid., vii., 19, 20; ix., 50.
[6] Ibid., x., 24; ix., 25; xiii., 33; xvi., 10.
[7] Luke, iv., 18; v., 32; vii., 23; xii., 7, 8, 15, 48; xiv., 8, 13, 14.

that a man's life consisted not in the abundance of the things he possesseth.

That to whom much is given, of Him much shall be required.

That we should choose the lowest room, when invited; and when we feast, call the poor and impotent, who cannot recompense us; that he who humbleth himself shall be exalted.

That joy shall be in heaven, in the presence of the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth.[1]

That we should make ourselves friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness, and beware of avarice.

That what is highly esteemed among men, is abomination in the sight of God.

That, when we shall have done all those things which are commanded us, we are unprofitable servants; and have done that which was our duty to do.

That the kingdom of God is within us.

Christ's Godhead.[2]

That except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

That God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

That God is a Spirit, and they who worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and in truth.

That we should not labour for the meat which perishes, but for the meat which endureth unto everlasting life.

That He, the Bread of Life, came down from heaven, not to do His own will, but the will of the Father who sent Him.

That those who believe (that is, obey His commands), He will raise at the last day.

That we should not judge according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment.[3]

[1] Luke, xv., 18; xvi., 9, 14, 15; xvii., 10, 21.

[2] John, i.; iii., 3, 5, 16, 17, 36; iv., 29; vi., 27, 38, 40, 44, 48.

[3] Ibid., vii., 24; x., 14, 15; xii., 25; xiii., 34, 35; xiv., 6,

That He is the Good Shepherd, who lays down His life for His sheep.

That He who loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life, shall keep it to eternal life.

"A new Commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another. By this shall all men know, that you are my disciples, if ye love one another."

That He is the way, the truth, and the life; and that no man cometh to the Father but by Him.

Nor did our Blessed Lord teach any thing but what Himself recommended by His own practice. His sacred dictates were as legible in His life as in the Holy Scriptures; not a precept in his sermons which he did not illustrate by His example. Take we that summary and compendium of all that is divine and moral in His Sermon on the Mount; and where shall we find such a body of wisdom and reason amongst all the writings of the most pretending sects and the most refined philosophy. What counsels, what rules and noble maxims, shine in all his heavenly discourses! They are sprinkled through the Gospels, Epistles, and sacred pages, in wonderful, plentiful, sublime, and unsuspected truths, to justify His doctrine and the mysteries of our salvation!

Consider we the pains He took to instruct His disciples, letting no occasion pass, no accident, no object almost escape, which He did not turn and improve to our advantage, attributing the glory of all His illustrious miracles, stupendous works, and actions to His Heavenly Father only. He instructs us in the duties of humility, purity of heart, love and charity so uni-

versal and unconfined, as not to exclude our bitterest enemies and persecutors; virtues which no other religion or institution ever had notion of.

He exhorts us to pay obedience to parents, loyalty and tribute to princes and superiors; to be generously charitable; in a word, to do unto others as we would be done to; instructing, pardoning, healing, and continually going about to do good. For from the goodness, excellency, and perfection of the Author, nothing can proceed but what was good, perfect, and superexcellent. And therefore did none of His disciples exaggerate or panegyrize the accomplishments of their Great Master, but relate matter of fact only, simply, plainly, without affectation, as knowing that the purity and intrinsic value of the doctrine would raise admirers, and cause it to be readily received.

Let us go through the holy depositories with whom He left His Testament and Commands, and take a survey of what He did as well as taught; and there we shall find that the energy of a word only made men forsake all they had in the world, to follow Him. His doctrine showed who were *the blessed, the salt of the earth, the lights of the world.* He expounds and vindicates the law of God about killing, adultery, swearing, suffering wrong, charity, and labour after perfection.

He tells them *His* meat and drink was to do the will of God. He teaches what we are to believe, and how to worship the Deity;[1] and more is there said in two words, to discharge religion from superstition, than all

[1] Luke, v., 10; John, iv., 24.

the philosophy, divinity, and speculations of the world did ever hold out. Oh, stupendous mystery! He gives us the bread of life, that we may never hunger, and drink, that we thirst no more; and explains the wonder, and that the words which He spake, are spirit and life; the flesh profits nothing. What effusions of grace could any, save the God of Grace, utter in such melting, obliging, pathetic expressions! He pardons notorious sinners, feeds multitudes, heals all desperate diseases. He washes His disciples' very feet, even the traitor Judas's, to teach us humility, mutual love, and condescension. He forewarns Peter, comforts His sad disciples, shows them the way to bliss, promises the Holy Ghost; assures us our prayers shall be heard; prays for us Himself, and goes to prepare mansions, and that He will never leave His Church to the end of the world.

Who is able to read those dying and last words of our Blessed Jesus, without the most rapturous passion and transports of love and wonder? In sum, He intercedes for His malicious foes, and, expiring, prays His Father to forgive them who had nailed Him to the Cross, and used Him with such indignity. And thus have we His example as well as His precepts.

Pass we now from our Saviour to His Apostles, and those who heard His gracious words, and received His sacred dictates from His own mouth. They speak and teach no other doctrine; they live no other life.—

That word, which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ (He is Lord of all)—that Word, which was published throughout all Judea, and began

from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the Devil; for God was with Him—they were witnesses of; and of all things which He did, both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged upon a tree;[1] Him God raised up the third day, and showed Him openly; not unto all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to the Apostles, who did eat and drink with him after He rose from the dead. And He commanded them to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained of God to be judge of quick and dead. To Him give all the Prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believed in Him, shall receive remission of sins.

And that they might be able to do this,[2] when the day of Pentecost was fully come, and they were all with one accord in one place, suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a mighty rushing wind; and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost; and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem devout men out of every nation under heaven. And when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language, by which they were able to preach unto all nations the doctrine of the Gospel which before was made known to the Jews only; but they, still rejecting it, they turned to the Gentiles (who were first called Christians at Antioch);[3] exhorting them to turn from idols unto the Living God, who made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein; who, in times past, suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. (Nevertheless, He left not Himself without witness, in that He did good,

[1] Acts, x., 36-39. [2] Ibid., ii., 1, 12. [3] Ibid., xiii., 42, 46.

and gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.) But now commandeth all men every where to repent; because He hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man, whom He hath ordained, namely, the Lord Jesus.[1] And to confirm this, special miracles were, upon all occasions, wrought by the hands of the Apostles; their sound going into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world.

With what sweetness does St. Paul treat his implacable enemies the Jews? With what admirable courage and patience do the rest of the Apostles go through their ministry! With what patient humility, temperance, charity, and indefatigable industry do they behave themselves! What nobler arguments can there be of the heavenly doctrine?—

I beseech you, brethren, [says St. Paul][2] by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

And be not conformed to this world, nor think of yourselves more highly than ye ought, but with sobriety. Let him that giveth, do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, in honour preferring one another. Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing instant in prayer. Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.

Bless them who persecute you; bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind one towards another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low degree. Be not

[1] Acts, x., 30. [2] Rom., xii.

wise in your own conceits. Recompence no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. Revenge not yourselves; but rather give place to wrath. Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink, &c. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

Let every soul be subject to the higher power;[1] for there is no power, but of God. Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the Power, resisteth the ordinance of God. Wherefore, ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but for conscience' sake. For this cause pay you tribute also—render, therefore, to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour. Owe no man anything, but to love one another. For he that loveth another, fulfilleth the Law.

The night is far spent; the day is at hand. Let us, therefore, cast off the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying; but put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provisions for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

Then, that men may not condemn one another in things indifferent, he exhorts us to follow after the things which make for peace and edification.

That the strong should bear with the weak, and not please themselves, after the example of Christ.

In his Epistles to the *Corinthians*,[2] he exhorts, If any man who is called a brother, be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.

And taking notice of their going to law: Why do ye not rather take wrong? Why do you not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?[3]

Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with

[1] Rom., xiii. [2] I. Cor., v., 11. [3] Ibid., vi., 7; iv., 20.

mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners shall inherit the Kingdom of God. What! know ye not that your body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price. Therefore, glorify God in the body and in the spirit, which are God's.

Then, concerning marriage, continence, and virginity,[1] what admirable precepts and counsels! That they who had wives, be as those who had none; they that weep, as though they wept not; they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it; for the fashion of this world passeth away. Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.[2] Give no offence—even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved. Covet earnestly the best things; and follow after charity.[3] For, if we speak with the tongue of men and angels, and have not charity, and have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge, and though I have all faith to remove mountains, and have not charity, (he shows) we are nothing. Nay, though we bestow all our goods, to relieve the poor, and give our bodies to be burned, and have not charity, it profits nothing.

Then he shows us the nature of this virtue: charity suffereth long, and is kind. Charity envyeth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up; doth not behave itself unseemly; seeketh not her own; is not easily provoked; thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth. Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth; but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. But now

[1] I. Cor., vii., 29, 30, 31, 32. [2] Ibid., x., 31, 32, 33.
[3] Ibid., xii, 31.; xiii., 1-9.

abideth faith, hope, charity; but the greatest of these is charity.

Then he discourses of the Resurrection, both of Christ and of the saints, which he proves by most urgent reasons, with the fruits and manner of it, throughout the whole fifteenth chapter. And then, treating of afflictions by his own example. We are troubled[1] (says he) on every side, but not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed. Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the Life of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For which cause we faint not; but, though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen, are temporal; but the things which are not seen, are eternal. For we know that, if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.[2] For we walk by faith, not by sight, and must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. That all things are of God, who hath reconciled the world to himself by Jesus Christ, not imputing these trespasses unto another. Having, therefore, these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.[3]

Then, to stir up a liberal contribution for the poor saints, he urges the example of Christ. That, though He was rich, yet, for our sakes, He became poor, that we, through His poverty,

[1] II. Cor., iv., 7. [2] Ibid., v., 1. [3] Ibid., vii., 1.

might be rich,[1] And that if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not (c. ix., 7). And would have provision made for honest and decent things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.

In his Epistle to the Galatians, he shows that he received not this doctrine from man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ;[2] and shows how we are not sanctified by the Law, but by faith in Christ. And that, though an angel from Heaven preach any other Gospel than that the Apostle preached, he should be accursed. And proceeds to describe the hostility between the flesh and the spirit, the fruits of which is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against which there is no law. And that they who are Christ's, have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

In the next period, he moves to gentleness towards those who have slipped.[3] If a man be overtaken in a fault, he should be restored in the spirit of meekness, considering our common frailty (II. Thess).

That we should bear one another's burdens; and so fulfil the Law of Christ. Let him that is taught in the Word communicate to him that teacheth in all good things. And not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. But, as we have opportunity, do good unto all men, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

In that to the *Ephesians*[4]—in the first chapter whereof he treats of the high mystery of Election and Adoption; and how Christ is set at the right hand of God the Father, far above all principalities and power, and might and dominion, and every name that is named, and hath all things put under his feet, being the head of the Church, which is his body. How we are quickened and saved by his grace, through faith, when

[1] II. Cor., viii., 9. [2] Gal., i., 8, 12; ii., 16; v., 17, 22, 24.
[3] Ibid., vi., 1. [4] Ephes., i.

Gentiles, and without God in the world. That He is our peace, having demolished the partition-wall, and reconciled us unto God, by his Cross, so as by Him we have access to the Father (iii. 12). And, being no more strangers and foreigners, are become fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone, &c.

These mysteries, hid from the beginning of the world, never till now made known to the sons of men,[1] (he tells us) were now first revealed; namely, that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and partakers in the promises of Christ by the Gospel. He cautions us against divisions and inconstancy; exhorts to put off the old man, and put on the new: to be angry without sin, that the sun go not down upon our wrath, neither give place to the Devil. That he who stole, steal no more; but work with his hands, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers. And grieve not the Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking, be put away from you with all malice: and be ye kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven us.

That neither fornication, uncleanness, or covetousness, should so much as be named among saints, nor so much as foolish vain talking, or jesting; but rather giving of thanks, walking circumspectly, redeeming the time.[2]

In his Epistle to the *Philippians*[3], exhorting to unity and other graces. Let nothing (says he) be done through strife or in vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other

[1] Ephes., iii., 5, 6; iv., 24-32. [2] Ibid., v., 3, 15, 16.

[3] Phil., ii., 3, 6, 7, 8, 14, 15.

better than themselves, after the example of Christ, who, being in the form of God, and equal with God, made himself of no reputation; but took (emptying himself) upon him the form of a servant; yea, so humbled himself, as to become obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross.

Do all things without murmuring, that ye may be blameless and harmless, and without rebuke.

Rejoice in the Lord. Let your moderation be known to all men. Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.

Finally, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report, if there be any virtue, if any praise, think on these things. What can be more divine?[1]

To the *Colossians*,[2] what an admirable description is there of our Blessed Saviour, and of the infinite benefits of his Redemption! His blotting out the handwriting that was against us, and nailing it to his Cross, and exempting us from the legal ceremonies of meats, drinks, days, &c., which were shadows of things to come;[3] exhorting us to put off anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication, not lie to one another; but (as the Elect of God) to put on bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, with all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing, with grace in your hearts, to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. That wives submit to their own husbands; husbands to love their wives, and not to be bitter against them (Ephes., v., 25-33). That children honour and obey their parents in all things (Ephes., v., 1, 2). That fathers provoke them not to anger, lest they be

[1] Phil., iv., 4-6, 8. [2] Coloss., i., 15, 22. [3] Ibid., iii., 1, 2, 8, 9, 12.

discouraged; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. That servants obey their masters, not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, as to Christ, fearing God, who will reward it.[1] In the mean time, that masters give them that which is equal and just, forbearing threatening, knowing they have a Master in Heaven, who has no respect of persons.

That we should continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving, walking discreetly among them who are without, redeeming the time. Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.

Then, in the First Epistle to the *Thessalonians*,[2] the same Apostle proceeds with exhortations to purity and sanctification. That no man go beyond, and defraud or overreach his brother in any matter. That Christians study to be quiet, and do their own business, and work with their own hands, that they may have lack of nothing. Nor sorrow for the dead, as those who have no hope, comforting them with an assured resurrection, describing the manna of it, and Christ's glorious and sudden coming. And therefore how necessary it is to be watchful and sober, to warn them who are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, to be patient towards all men, to rejoice evermore, to pray without ceasing, in every thing to give thanks, not to quench the spirit, nor despise prophecy, but to prove all things, and hold fast that which is good; nay, to abstain from all appearance of evil.

In the Second Epistle,[3] continuing his description of the dreadful Judgment, warns them of the general defection, at the coming of Antichrist, previous to the coming of our Saviour at the last day.

In his two Epistles to Timothy, he exhorts that first of all supplications, prayer and intercession, and giving of thanks,

[1] Coloss., iv., 1, 5, 6. [2] I. Thess., iv., 6; v., 3, 4.

[3] II. Thess., i., ii.

be made for all men: for kings and all in authority, that we may lead a quiet, peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty, as a thing acceptable to God, who will have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth; there being one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all.

In like manner, also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety, as becomes women professing godliness, with good works. That they learn in silence with all subjection. That they presume not to teach in the Church, as being first in the transgression; that, notwithstanding, she shall be saved in child-bearing, if they continue in faith, and charity, and holiness, with sobriety.

Then, in the next chapter,[1] he teaches who Bishops and Deacons should demean themselves, and govern and minister in the Church. That they be blameless, vigilant, sober, given to hospitality, apt to teach, no strikers, not greedy of filthy lucre, impatient, or covetous; ruling his own house well, that they may know how to take care of the Church, lest they be conceited; not given to much wine, that they may know how to behave themselves in the house of God, which is the Church of the Living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. And then shows, that great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh, justified of the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up to glory.

Thence proceeds he to show the apostacy of the latter times,[2] teaching the doctrine of devils, forbidding to marry and to abstain from meats and other indifferent things, obtruding profane and old wives' fables and bodily exercises, &c., (II. Tim., iii.)

Then gives rules for the reproving of others;[3] that elderly people should be entreated as fathers and mothers, the younger as brethren and sisters, with all purity; that real widows be

[1] II. Thess., iii. [2] Ibid., iv. [3] Ibid., v.

honoured, and their children taught to requite their parents; and if any provide not for his own house, he is worse than an infidel. He also describes such as are to be imputed widows, indeed, well reported of for good works, if she have brought up children, lodged strangers, washed the saints' feet, relieved the afflicted, and followed every good work. Giving a character of the younger idle widows, tatlers, and busybodies. How the young should marry, bear children, guide the house, and give no occasion of reproach. Then, that the Bishops should rebuke them that sin, that others may take warning, and do all things impartially; nor lay hands (to ordain or absolve others) suddenly on none, or be partaker of other men's sins.

He proceeds to show how godliness, with contentedness, is great gain;[1] and that, having brought nothing into the world, having food and raiment, we should therewith be content. For that they who will be rich, fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in perdition; the love of money being the root of all evil, which, while some coveted after, they erred from the Faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. He therefore charges the rich, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the Living God, who gives us all things richly to enjoy. That they do good, be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold of eternal life.

In the Second Epistle,[2] he shows how Christ has abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light, through the Gospel. That all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

He charges Timothy[3] to preach the Word, to be instant in

[1] II. Thess., vi. [2] II. Tim., i. [3] Ibid., iv.

season, out of season, to reprove, rebuke with all long-suffering and doctrine; warning him of the perverseness of men.

In like manner to Titus,[1] (Bishop of Crete) he shows how the ministers of the Gospel should behave themselves, that they may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convince the gainsayers. And then proceeds to give precepts how all sorts of Christians should live:[2] that the aged be grave, sober, temperate, sound in the faith; that young women be sober, discreet, chaste, keepers at home, obedient to their husbands; that servants, being reproved, answer not again; that they purloin nothing. For that the grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of that Great God, and our Saviour, Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

In the following chapter,[3] he puts them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates (though they were at that time Heathens), and to speak evil of no man; considering what God our Saviour has called us to, by His infinite kindness and love; not for works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs of eternal life.

In his Epistle to *Philemon*,[4] see what bowels of charity to a repenting fugitive servant, whom he reconciles to his master.

The Epistle to the *Hebrews*[5]—whether St. Paul's, or of any other Christian author—in the first chapter, describes the incomparable person of our Saviour, by whom He has in these last days spoken to us. He shows us how He made the

[1] Tit., i. [2] Ibid., ii. [3] Tit., iii.
[4] Philem. [5] Hebrews.

worlds; who, being the Son of God, the heir of all things, is the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, upholding all things by the word of His power, and, having purged our sins, is set down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, as being in pre-eminence infinitely higher than the angels, who are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation. By this exaggerating the infinite condescension of our Saviour's exinanition, in that being so great a person, He should take upon Himself, and suffer in our nature. And thence infers the danger of infidelity, by the bad example of the Jews. For that the Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword,[1] piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight; but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. And that, since we have such an High Priest, who is passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God,[2] we should hold fast our profession. He shows the great preference of our Saviour's Priesthood to all the Legal High Priests, who were but temporal, and could not, with all their sacrifices, oblations, and intercessions, by reason of their infirmities, make any thing perfect (vii., 27, 28).

But Christ, though in all things tempted like us, was yet without sin. That, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong cries and tears for us unto God, though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience, by the things which He suffered; and, being made perfect, became the Author of eternal salvation unto all that obey Him.

He proceeds in the next to exalt our Saviour's priesthood[3] above the *Aaronical*, as being eternal and immortal, and employed about a better Covenant, (viii., 6) as being able to save

[1] Heb., iv. [2] Ibid., v. [3] Ibid., vi.

them to the uttermost,[1] that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for us. For such an High Priest became us, who is holy, blameless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.

In the next three chapters,[2] describing the rites of these sanguinary sacrifices under the law, and their great insufficiency, as being figures, to remain only till the time of the reformation, that is, till Christ should come an High Priest of better things. For, if the bloods of bulls and goats under the law, expiatory to the purifying of the flesh, (farther than which it did not reach) how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the Eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge our conscience from dead works, to serve the Living God? Nor did He enter into the sanctuary (as did Aaron and his successors) with the blood of others; but now once in the end of the world He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. And as it is appointed to me once to die, and after that, the Judgment; so Christ being once offered to bear the sins of many—to them who look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation. The same He pursues to confirm in the following chapter: showing that God had no pleasure in the legal sacrifices, as being impossible to take away sin, but as referring to Christ (Ps. xl., 6, &c.) Who by one offering hath perfected for ever them who are sanctified. Having therefore boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus by a new and living way, he exhorts us to draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. To hold fast the profession of our faith, for the danger of wilfully sinning, after the knowledge of the truth, there being no more sacrifice for sin, and the dreadfulness of the punishment.

He shows what faith is,[3] and the efficacy of it, by the ex-

[1] Heb., vii. [2] Ibid., viii., ix., x. [3] Ibid., xi.

ample of the patriarchs and prophets, and other holy men, who in all ages suffered for it, in expectation of the reward of their patience and other virtues.[1] That being compassed with such a cloud of illustrious witnesses for our encouragement, we should run with patience the race which is set before us. Looking unto Jesus, the Author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy set before Him, endured the Cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. That, being now redeemed from the servitude and difficulties of a severe dispensation, we are by Christ admitted to Mount Sion, to the city of the Living God, to the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels. To the general Assembly and Church of the First-born who are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel, &c. Concluding with sundry Christian admonitions concerning fraternal love.[2] That they should not forget to entertain strangers, for that thereby some have unawares received angels. Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them, and them that suffer affliction. Remember them who have the oversight of you, and have spoken unto you the Word of God, whose faith follow, considering the end of their converation. Be not carried away with divers and strange doctrines. To do good, and to distribute, forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

Thus far that holy Apostle and Author of these epistles.

Now we come to St. James,[3] whose epistle is full of Divine exhortation as to patience under the Cross; and that in trials and temptations we should not impute our frailties to God, who tempts no man, but that every man is tempted, when He is drawn away and enticed of his own lust. That we should be slow to speak, slow to wrath; doers of the Word, not

[1] Heb., xii. [2] Ibid., xiii. [3] James, i.

hearers only. That, if any man pretending to religion, bridles not his tongue, his religion is vain. For that true religion and undefiled before God is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world. That we should not have respect to persons, and show partiality, but so speak and do as they that shall be judged by that perfect law of liberty.[1] For that he shall have judgment without mercy, who shows no mercy, and that faith without works is dead, and nothing worth; for even the devils believe and tremble. He advises that we should not be many masters; for that in many things we offend all, especially with the tongue, which is a fire, and full of a world of iniquity, and therefore to be severely bridled.[2]

Then he describes heavenly wisdom, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, without hypocrisy.

The following chapters declaim against avarice,[3] intemperance, pride, detraction, and censoriousness, and other vices, exhorting to patience, justice, and other virtues. Above all things, not to swear, but that our communication be simple, affirmative or negative. Is any afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing Psalms. Confess your faults mutually, and pray for one another, for the extraordinary effect of devout prayer by the example of Elias.

The like excellent lessons we have in the following Epistles of St. Peter,[4] where, treating of the incomparable mysteries of the Gospel, he shows how the very angels desire to look into them; and therefore exhorts Christians to sanctity and holiness of life in all conversation, that so we may resemble God, who is holy. That we shall pass our time here in pious fear, inasmuch as we were not redeemed with corruptible things, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, who verily was fore-ordained before

[1] James, ii. [2] Ibid., iii.
[3] James, iv., v. [4] I. Peter, i.

the foundation of the world, but was manifested in these last times to us who believe in God, that raised Him from the dead, &c.[1] Then he recommends obedience to magistrates. Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king. That servants reverence their masters, suffering their frowardness after the example of our Master, Christ, who suffered for us, and who did no sin; yet, being reviled, reviled not again; but committed Himself to Him who judgeth righteously; who His own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree; by whose stripes we are healed.

And the same holy Apostle[2] teaches husbands and wives their duties, to win one another by their chaste and holy conversation, rather than by plaiting their hair, and adorning themselves with jewels; but with meek and quiet spirits, which is, in the sight of God, of great price. That husbands likewise give honour to their wives, as to the weaker vessel, and as heirs together of the grace of life. In a word, that Christians should be all of one mind, compassionate to one another, to love as brethren, be pitiful and courteous, and always ready to give an answer to every man that asketh a reason of the hope which is in us.

In the following chapter[3] he exhorts us to bear persecution patiently for the name of Christ, and to esteem it as a glory. But that none suffer as a malefactor, or busybody in other men's matters, which do not concern him. For that the time is coming, that judgment must begin at the house of God. And if it first begin there, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God? And, if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear? Wherefore let them who suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well doing, as to a faithful Creator, casting all care upon Him, for He cares for us. Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour, whom

[1] I Peter, ii. [2] Ibid., iii. [3] Ibid., iv.

we are to resist steadfast in the faith.[1] And he goes on in the following epistle, showing what precious promises are made to us in the Gospel, that by them we might be partakers of the Divine nature, by giving all diligence, and adding to faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, to knowledge temperance, to temperance patience, to patience godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity, giving all diligence to make our calling and election sure. For in this chapter the Apostle seriously professes that they did not follow cunningly devised fables, when they made known to us the power and coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty, when receiving from God the Father, honour and glory, there came such a voice to Him, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this which came from heaven, they heard when they were with Him in the holy mountain. To confirm which yet more fully, they had, above all, that sure and illustrious word of prophecy, the Scriptures, no prophecy of which is of any private interpretation, nor did it (he tells us) come of old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; warning Christians of such false prophets,[2] as shall bring in damnable heresies, to the very denying of Christ. But that, as God spared not the lapsed angels, casting them down to hell and chains of darkness to the judgment day, nor indulged other notorious sinners, but reserving Noah and righteous Lot from ruin, so would He deliver His servants from temptation and evil, describing the manner of those seducers, that they may be avoided.[3] Then he proceeds to treat of our Saviour certainly coming to judgment against those wicked persons and those scoffers, who question and deride the promise of His coming, seeing so little alteration of things in the world, and that nature holds on her course, as if it should never have an end; not considering that, as the world was once destroyed for sin by

[1] II. Peter, i. [2] Ibid., ii. [3] Ibid., iii.

water, so the heavens and earth which are now, are but kept in store and reserved for a general conflagration, and the perdition of impious men at the last day. And thus God is not slack concerning His promise, (as some count slackness) for that a thousand years are but as a day to Him, but is long suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but repent. For that, that day will come, as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works which are therein be burnt up. Seeing, then, that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. And therefore it imports us to be diligent, that we may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless, &c.

After St. Peter comes the blessed disciple and evangelist, St. John,[1] still confirming the same thing, as to the truth of the Gospel, by the most undeniable and sensible demonstration. That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of Life—declare we unto you; and that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sins; and that, if we confess them, we shall find mercy.

If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous; and He is the propitiation for our sins and for the sins of the whole world.[2] That to know God, is to keep His Commandments, and love our brethren, and not the world. For all that is in the world, is but the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life; and the world passes away, and all its enjoyments. Then, warning against *Anti-christian* seducers, he proceeds to describe the incomparable love of God to the faithful.

What manner of love[3] (says he, even in admiration at it)

[1] John, i. [2] Ibid., ii. [3] Ibid., iii.

hath the Father bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God? And what shall we farther be when Christ shall appear, namely, like to God Himself; and therefore, how highly it becomes those who have such hopes, to purify themselves, even as He is pure.

He shows that the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the Devil. And that, as He laid down His life for us, so should we for our brethren, and therefore much more relieve their necessities, as a mark of our love to God.

In the chapter following,[1] he warns us of too forward credulity of such as boast of the spirits, and that therefore we should try them first. And then returns again to the magnifying the exceeding love of God; not that we loved Him; but He, us; and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. And if He so loved us, we ought to love one another. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God.[2] Lastly, concludes, by showing that the children of God overcome the world by faith, and that His Commandments are not grievous. Then he speaks of other mysteries.

St. Jude[3] also treats of the common salvation, and that we should contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. It is from this Apostle that we learn how the angels who kept not their first state, but left their own habitations, are reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day. Then he describes the wickedness and horrible punishment of seducers, rebels, and voluptuous men.

Finally, in the former beloved Disciple's *Revelation*, we have not only a prophecy of what shall happen in the last times from the coming of the Antichrist to the last Judgment, full of prophecy and mystery, but many excellent lessons, encouraging the faithful to persevere to the end. We have there the description of what the Church shall suffer; of death, resur-

[1] John, iv. [2] Ibid., v. [3] Jude.

rection, judgment, hell, the heavenly Jerusalem, and the felicity of the saints, with a heavy curse to whomsoever shall presume to add to or detract from the Word of God and the Gospel of Christ, which this Divine Book seals up. And He who testifieth these things, saith surely, I come quickly. Even so come, Lord Jesus.

PART II. REFLECTIONS ON CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

This is the Christian Doctrine, and this their preaching, which we see was[1] not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power. They had the testimony of a good conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not in fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, they had their conversation in this world. And, though they walked in the flesh as mortal men, they did not walk after the flesh. Nor were the weapons of their warfare carnal, which did these great things, and wrought this change in the world by preaching the Gospel; but mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalted itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

In a word, every thing in the Christian doctrine concurs to render its votaries happy, and infinitely to be preferred before any other religion whatsoever. For, besides temporal benedictions, it sanctifies the soul, establishes the heart, directs and encourages by example, and the highest rewards imaginable. So that

[1] I. Cor., ii., 4.

the Christian morals are not a simple idea alone of perfection, but real ones; not (as the law) written indeed, on stone, but engraven in men's consciences. It teaches to deny all ungodly and worldly lusts, pomps and vanities, and to live soberly and righteously in all godliness, honesty, and decency to all relations; to repress our exorbitant passions, to descend from our haughtiness, and to acknowledge every body our brother; to part from our possessions, rather than do wrong, and from our lives, than deny the Faith, or fail in works of justice and liberality, and to that degree as to send relief from the most distant parts of Greece to the distressed Saints, as far off as Jerusalem, whom they had never seen; to live with so universal a charity, as if the whole world had been but one family, and this, without the least ostentation. In a word, it raises the heart to the highest speculations, and renders it capable of the noblest impressions, having for its end the most glorious recompence.

Indeed, all these transcendant virtues did not continue in the Church without alloy and interruption after a while, by reason of human frailty, and the corruption of the times: Satan being more than ever concerned for his kingdom, which the Gospel did so terribly shake. But it pleased God it should prevail for a space, yea, and for some ages; and, like the sun, now and then under clouds, emerge and break out again, dissipating the darkness, and chasing away the mists; and shine it shall do more and more, maugre all the power of Hell, as long as sun and moon endure, yea, for ever and ever.

If we consider the sublimer Mysteries of the Christian Faith, they are such as eye never saw, ear never heard, or hath entered into the heart of man so much as to conceive. Objects infinitely above senses, yet highly rational: such the expiatory sacrifice of an Incarnate God; the Union Hypostatical; the Adorable Trinity; the Soul's Immortality; the Communion of Saints; Resurrection of the Dead; Remission of Sins; and Everlasting Life.

These are not the speculations of contemplative and mopish book-men, but truths and real things; not (as we said) contrary to sound reason, but above it, to humble our proud aspirings, and raise our veneration; to exercise our faith and other graces, not to gratify our sight and wanton curiosity, which were to take from the virtue, and consequently from the reward. Moreover, so proceeds it in order of nature, darkness before light, infancy before full stature, milk before strong meats, teaching before learning. It disciplines us to wisdom, not by starts and leaps, but by gentle degrees, from shadows to substances, from types to verities. And since the world, through its own wisdom, knew not these things, God was pleased that the reputed foolishness of His Doctrine should confound the wisdom of the wise in their own conceits.

Wherefore, to illustrate this truth the more, let us look back a little, and see what other the most famous and prevailing religions do afford, or can pretend to, in competition with the Christian.

SECTION IV.

CHRISTIANITY CONTRASTED WITH OTHER RELIGIONS.

1. SUPERIORITY OVER THE PAGAN RELIGION.

I begin with the Pagan and Gentile, the most refined and philosophical.[1] The ancient Greek and Roman religion was composed, we know, but of the raillery and fictions of poets, perverted imitations of ancient rites, by diabolical auguries, raking into the entrails of beasts, the flying of birds, and other vanities and superstitions, so exceedingly ridiculous, that Porphyry himself is in pain to explicate their fantastical, and, some of them, impious and abominable mysteries. Such were those of Ceres, Bacchus, Flora, and other secret rites, filthy, tumultuous, profane, cruel, and altogether barbarous. They were some of them performed in obscurity, and forbidden to be divulged, it being a shame so much as to speak of what was done in it. Whereas, that which Christ has taught us, is an open, manifest, and ingenuous profession, pure and chaste, sober and grave, and which discovers itself without any cloud or material veil, and is ashamed of nothing it either says or does, whilst it qualifies its followers to see, and to make known things invisible; even God himself, not by our outward senses, but an inward spiritual illumination. It acquaints us with the whole council of Heaven to our utmost capacity, and shows us how the Almighty governs

[1] We disdain to mention the stupid, ignorant, and totally barbarous, such as were and are yet among the uncivilized nations.

all things by His Providence, making evil subservient to good, and to do His will, even by the most averse and contrary means. The blinded Heathen, after all their scrutiny, could discover nothing but uncertain conjectures; and their oracular responses, after all their applications, were the cheats of their idolatrous Priests and Satanic impostors; and such as gave no heed to them, attributed all to chance and fortune.

The Pagans made their gods of mortal, vicious men; the Christians, of the holy and righteous Creator of all mankind: the Pagans made images of their gods, and dedicated to them temples; the Christian makes none of his; because with him every man is God's image, and the whole universe His temple. Cicero himself reproves the folly of the Pagan ceremonies, their cruelties, lying oracles, and ridiculous auguries; and some wondered they did not laugh at one another, when they were about their silly tricks and solemn impertinences; fitter to stupify and amuse the ignorant, than to instruct them, and to incur the derision and contempt of the wiser; and, having in them nothing of solid and true, they satisfied no doubts, established nothing of virtue, nothing of the soul's future state, nor whence she came, nor for what end, nor who or what to trust nor rely on, to whom of all their gods they should apply themselves, or whether to all of them in general, for fear of disobliging some particular one.

But, to pass by these more gross and unaccountable: we affirm, the most refined and philosophic Pagans came infinitely short of the Christian, both for truth

and sublimity; the most rational among them being more prone to worship and adore the sun and constellations, than the God who made the sun and all the stars; to celebrate cruel and bloody spectacles, lewd representations, feasts and debaucheries, to the honour of their idols and false deities, than to worship that spiritual Being, whom natural reason might tell them was not like to any thing made with hands and men's device; or to be conciliated by impure and human victims,—abstinence from certain meats, and other superstitious austerities, rather than to abstain from carnal lusts and other abominations—to give the fruit of their body for the sin of their soul, and sacrifice their children to devils, than mortify and kill their vices and sensual inclinations. The consideration of which made some of its votaries conclude the necessity of a purgative course; and, contemplating the pravity of human nature, to acknowledge it could not be cleansed and rectified by any ceremonies; but by some property in God, which Porphyry calls the Intellect of the Father, and Mundane Soul; but which, indeed, that apostate should have named the Wisdom of the Father, by whom He made the world; and does at last confess, that none of the Heathen ever showed the means of attaining it.

2. PHILOSOPHIC RELIGION.

As to the Philosophic Religion, so far does the Christian transcend it, that the very best of their morals have been taxed, and some deprehended in the most

abominable impurities. Socrates himself (as we showed) has been suspected, as well as the great Alcibiades. Diogenes was shameless; nay, even Trajan, Seneca, and others of the best reputation, were charged with avarice, pride, and covetousness. Against all which the Christian Religion not only denounces, but has given the greatest and most signal instances to the contrary, virtues, purity, charity, and humility, exalted to their highest pitch.

They will tell us, indeed, that their wise man should restrain the passions, and vanquish his inclinations; but assign no reason for it, beyond the ease and happiness of the present state. That sublime idea, which carries the sincere Christian to live as becomes him, they had no notion of. And, though some of them became even martyrs, rather than break their word, or do a dishonourable action, by which their country might be damnified (such as were Curtius, Regulus, Scævola, Lucretia, &c.), most of them had undoubtedly an eye to ostentation and the praise of men. Others made themselves away out of shame or fear; nor was Cato's and Cleopatra's true and real fortitude. And thus do the reduced Indian widows burn themselves on the funeral pile of their deceased husbands. Others fall down to a stone, that it may fall upon them, and the wheels of the idol-machine crush the adorers to pieces. And whence all this but out of a stupid zeal, or fantastic imagination of merit?

Tantum Religio potuit suadere malorum!

Whilst the Christian sufferer is full of joy and assurance that, being a lover of God and virtue, his labour shall

not be in vain; knowing that there is a reward for the righteous. His zeal is not a sudden heat, a cold or remiss devotion, but a calm, sedate, constant, and uniform course of exemplary holiness.

The Christian Religion shows how impossible it is we should heal ourselves without some supernatural assistance, derived from God. While all the shining virtues and pretences of the moral Heathen were more in glittering show than real substance. They were too weak to eradicate evil habits; they knew not what self-abnegation meant. The poor philosopher despises what he would above all things attain to; and the rich held fast what he had gotten, still accumulating more, not to do his neighbours good, but to please himself. Seneca (if not foully traduced) was an instance of this; than whom there was no man more covetous in the midst of affluence. Others of them changed the object, but retained their vices. If they departed from, or mortified, one folly, they soon embraced another, from prodigal to covetous, from lust to perjury, from intemperance to incharity. And what religion now is that, which successively encounters these successive hydras (which spring as fast as they are cut down), but the Christian, whose principles are of another force? Some of the Philosophers, indeed, spake and lived with more sincerity; but the instances were few; and the strictest of their wise men recommended virtue but for temporal advantages, health and ease of life, without much regard to the dignity of the soul, the honour of its Creator, and a life and being to come.

Some of them celebrated commutative justice, mercy,

and other virtues, but did not practise it. They had no bowels, when objects of pity lay before them. They knew not what humility was, and their patience was pride, or a morose obstinacy. They fancied thought was free; took no account of the interior man; had little influence on the mind; sought to suppress no imaginative or speculative lusts, so they broke not out into actions. Whilst the Christian teaches us, that the divine justice, though impartial, is full of compassion, that the way to ascend on high is to begin at the lowest step, and to conquer and overcome by suffering. It instructs us, that God is our absolute Legislator, and takes account not only of our outward actions, but of all our thoughts and imaginations, and of what we do in secret. It fears not the reproach, nor to be seen or praised of man; but seeks to be approved of Him, who searches the heart and tries the reins. In a word, it acquiesces in the order of the Divine decrees; and therefore prays His will be done; endeavours that all we say, do, or so much as think, be true, righteous, and holy, tending to the glory of our Heavenly Master and Benefactor only, without reserve; nor this of necessity, but of choice.

Thus, there is no compare between the Pagan philosopher and the Christian, either for the sanctity and efficacy of the precepts, or the sublimity of its mysteries; which natural reason alone is too weak to fathom. For what can all its forces do, when the Christian proposes the objects of his faith to consist in things immortal and of eternal durance? Reason will never prove that the motion of matter can produce a thought,

or that it has parts indissoluble. Natural reason, indeed, prompts men to love themselves, nay, and our neighbours too, and God above all; and, in the first place, will carry us a great way to virtue; but so far has corrupt nature perverted it, for politic and selfish ends, that what we pretend to do, by virtue of our nature, is monstrously defective. The Heathen philosopher made a glittering and specious show to the world,[1] not to mention many heroic actions performed by divers of them. But there was (as we noted) a mixture of vanity, glory to themselves, love of their country and other interests, without regard to the glory of God, as the End of all. Whom, since they knew not, they indeed could not love, and consequently not serve with that entire and interior purity and rational obedience with which the Christian does, and which renders his service acceptable, and improves morality beyond all that their sages ever attained to. The Epicurean was sensual; the Stoic proud; the Academic always doubting and uncertain; Plato, ideal and visionary; whilst the Christian philosopher, transcending carnal reasonings, submits to the obedience of faith, and looks to things beyond the ken of sense, to things supernatural and altogether divine. She satisfies and fills the mind, without tumor and ostentation; puts a difference between material and animal, intellectual and spiritual, which are in perpetual hostility the one against the other; and comes away with triumph.

For, if the speculations of those daring sects be not

[1] The morals of Cato, Seneca, Epictetus, and others.

subdued, and rendered modest by the power and virtue of Christian and Evangelical grace, it does mischief to religion, whilst looking no farther than matter and the mechanic effects produced by that alone. Philosophic Religion rests in lines and circles; will have sensible demonstration for things which, though they fall not under the rules of geometry, and diagrams of Euclid, are yet as certain and true, as their most infallible axioms and conclusions. Had religion been prescribed us, to learn how to philosophize on the nature of things, the theory would have been accordingly of a more sublime and spiritual nature. But, since it is given us to sanctify our hearts, it is reasonable our contemplations should be governed by something practical, refining, and effective of a good and holy life, without vain curiosity. Philosophy is not satisfied to know and contemplate things spiritual after a spiritual way; but she will comprehend the manner of the operation by springs material, and gross resorts, which Almighty God thinks fit to reserve to Himself alone, and to draw a curtain over. It will (as one observes of the scholastic wits) divide and decide, define and distinguish, cut and confound with unintelligible and useless notions, till it falls into nonsense and contradictions.

The mysteries of the Christian philosophy, or religion rather, are hidden in God, who will exercise our faith, not our wanton curiosity, in things not subject to our senses. Philosophy, as it will never make us comprehend what God will have kept secret, and unto us incomprehensible, so neither ought we to surrogate

false and adscititious ornaments of worldly wisdom upon what the Divine Wisdom will have represented in a plain and humble dress. For, as there are depths and abysses where the elephant may swim, the plummet can never reach; so there are, on the other side, fords where the lamb may wade. The beguiling charms of distinctions and magnificent subtleties have spawned into prodigious monsters, and the birth of error; and the most genuine constructions and things perspicuous are miserably entangled, strained, and exalted into mysteries altogether absurd and unintelligible. Thus has man's curiosity, rashness, superstition, and interest of parties with the soldiers who crucified our Lord, torn in pieces his seamless garment.

Philosophy proposes to satisfy curiosity, the Christian religion to mortify it; philosophy would comprehend the modus and manner of things, religion is content to be modestly ignorant; philosophy is swelled with knowledge, religion humbled by it. Whether the earth move, as Copernicus held, or the sun stand still, to solve the miracle in Joshua, and the shadow of Ahaz's dial, concern not the credibility of Scripture. The sacred writers were to speak to the capacity of the people, not to the schemes of philosophers. They studied not the explanation of natural things, but to sanctify the persons and edify the hearers, since such matters and appearances could not otherwise be explained to vulgar capacities.

In a word, the Christian philosophy is great without pride, humble without objection, knowing without cu-

riosity; and thus the profoundest scholars, the greatest wits of the time, (despising the scandal of the Cross and ignominy of suffering) submitted to the holy doctrine of Jesus. Origen, Justin Martyr, Cyprian, Nazianzen, that great genius St. Augustine, besides many Platonists and others of the sublimest parts, persons who had both time, ingenuity, and abilities, to have searched and detected impostures from real truths, preferred the Christian religion before all the high notions and speculations of the philosopher, and the political interests of the crafty world.

Never had mortal man, furnished with all the advantages of philosophic learning, conceived or thought of such a mystery as the Incarnation of the Son of God, and the sending of Him in our nature to teach us the way to Heaven, His merciful intentions towards us, to expiate our sins, and fit us for pardon and salvation, and by incontrovertible proofs to confirm in us the assurance of immortality and a future state of bliss, of which all the philosophers and wise men in the world were still in dispute and doubt. And all this, though transcending our comprehension and reasoning from knowing things in their causes, yet (as we said) agreeable to it, since our reason by what it observes and knows of the visible world and its admirable order, the motions of the heavenly orbs, periodic seasons, and operations of the elements, structure and instinct of animals, the variety and perfume of plants, the beauty of flowers, and the admirable course of

God's ordinary Providence,[1] His divine power and wisdom appear so infinitely vast and surprising, that it could not have been but the work of some Almighty and perfect Being.

And, as the Christian religion informs us of God, above any other, so does it of ourselves, our nature, original, and end, which no reason or experience, nothing less than a revelation could ever do; as, that we were not produced spontaneously from the earth, (as Epicurus held) that our souls were inbreathed by God, and made to glorify Him; and it assures us that, by so doing, we shall be deemed capable of a supernatural and godlike being. It shows us how sadly the whole human race fell from that excellent state in which man was created, and of his recovery by grace, qualified to the attaining of that Supreme Good, which all the great philosophers racked their utmost wits about, not knowing what it was, or where to find it.

Christian religion prescribes the way by precepts the most rational and perfectly satisfactory, that ever any institution pretended to. It fills at once with content, joy, and satisfaction, so that a Heathen was wont to say of it, *Nil nisi justum suadet*, disposing to the severest virtue, and altering the temper and constitution of the most inveterate customs. It proclaims universal peace and goodwill,[2] and, in a word, has renewed the face of all the world.[3] And thus, indeed, has Christ

[1] Job, vii., 17. [2] Isaiah, vi., 6; lxv., 25; lxvi., 12.
[3] Ἐπανορθωτὴς τοῦ κοσμοῦ.

(as the wicked Jews said of the Christians upon another occasion) turned the world upside down by His coming amongst us. His Coming was called, ὁ μέλλων αἰών, the world to come, or the new world; all things were now become so. Men's natures were changed; their minds elevated to objects above the common pitch, pure and spiritual, worthy of our heaven-born original, our immortal souls, and to speculate beyond these petty fading things, which have no real substance in them. It fills us with that amiable virtue of charity, purity of heart, inward satisfaction and self-complacency: in short, with whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, lovely, and of good report; if there be any virtue, if any praise to think and endeavour after those things.[1]

3. THE JEWISH RELIGION.

As to the Jewish religion, it was made up of a busy and operose law of carnal ordinances, which had but a very dim prospect beyond the enjoyment of plenty and affluence, particularly confined to their own country. It was, at best, the shadow of a light to be displayed. All, as yet, lay hidden under the veil, which veil was to be done away by Christ. It consisted of innumerable, chargeable, and bloody rites; and, as the Apostle called them, beggarly and ignoble elements, in comparison with the Gospel.[2] It could by no expiation free from either guilt or punishment the presumptuous sinner, nor any other, but as every sacrifice had relation to that

[1] Phil., iv., 8. [2] Gal., iv., 9.

Lamb of God, the Lord Jesus, who takes away not the sins of a peculiar tribe or nation only, but of the world. The light of nature and conscience condemns every man who transgresses the law written in his heart.[1] But, as to pardon, nothing was more blind and silent, till it pleased God to select a people whose service He would accept for remission under a severe and rigorous law, exacting punctual obedience, and denouncing curses and condemnation to the breakers of it. Whilst the Evangelical dispensation pardoned all transgressions without exception, upon true and hearty repentance; and was that welcome message, which the deplorable state of mankind had so long thirsted after, and was in suspense about.[2]

The privileges the Jews enjoyed were confined to so small a corner and despicable a people, that hardly were they considered by the rest of the nations, who lay in profound ignorance, strangers to the Covenant and without God in the world. Nor could men have repaired from the ends of the earth to worship at Jerusalem, as by their law they were obliged, and as some neighbouring proselytes might. But what a handful were these to the rest of mankind, to whom by Christ the Gospel Covenant was applicable.[3] The Apostles having charge to go and disciple all nations, and accordingly their sound went unto the ends of the world, at the miraculous descent of the Holy Ghost, when so many and different nations were present to receive and disperse it

[1] Rom., i., 20. [2] Rom., iii., 25; II. Cor., iii.

[3] Matt., xxviii., 19; Rom., x., 18.

gratis. And they who were to worship but at one particular place, and offer but at one altar, may now make every place a temple;[1] and, instead of material sacrifices, offer the calves of their lips and the incense of their prayers, and for the fruits of the earth the fruits of good works.

Moreover, the Mosaic dispensation was but for a certain time; for, though in divers Scriptures it is said, it should be for ever, meaning the law, the Jubilee, the Holy City, as Canaan to the seed of Abraham, &c., the service of the Hebrew whose ear was bored, plainly show, by the event and period of all these, and the nature of the things themselves, that it was to end, and but conditional, and to continue no longer than the things signified came in place. And it is a rule among divines that, where such phrases occur, if applied to God, they denote eternity; where to men and other things, but for a time. Indeed, divers of their ceremonies lasted awhile after the coming of the Messiah; but they soon dwindled away, and lost their obligatory virtue. They were not at once forced out with violence by our indulgent Legislator, but used indifferently, in compliance with the as yet weak and scrupulous converts, who had long been trained up under them, but who were tenderly weaned from them by degrees.

The Jews were a people infinitely delighted with pompous and busy superstition, and had ordinances accordingly, whilst they remained under that childish pedagogy. But, as they grew more mature, they un-

[1] John, iv., 21, 23.

derstood better things, how easy and light the yoke of Christ was in comparison with that of Moses, abrogating those painful rites, circumcision, prohibition from certain meats, bloody and chargeable oblations, troublesome ablutions, and legal purifications upon every slight occasion, burdensome feasts, Sabbaths, and new moons, tedious annual journeyings, and a world of other ceremonies, which neither they nor their fathers were able any longer to support.[1]

The Jews had little light, the Gentiles less; and the most learned and sagacious of them came to no determination. Nor could the Jews, with all their legal rites, make their votaries perfect. But then comes our Blessed Saviour, and introduces a more manly and rational religion, more suitable and congruous to the Divine perfection and dignity of that nature, which Heaven had endowed with an immortal principle.[2] In sum, a better Covenant established on better promises. Theirs was carnal and worldly; the Christian, spiritual and eternal. What they groped after in the dark, our Jesus brought to light, convincing them of the excellency of His law, not only by the miracles which He did, (beyond all that ever pretended to them) but by a more excellent way,

[1] As to the later pretences, the Gnostic and Rabbinical dreams; that grand heresian, Simon Magus, Basilides, Menander, and that rabble of Novatus, (of which we shall give an account in the ensuing chapter) their doctrine was merely visionary and fantastic, extravagant, cruel, profane, and impure; and, though mingled with the Jewish, was yet nothing of the Mosaic religion, being established on sensuality, curiosity, or worldly ambition, and for politic ends.

[2] II. Tim., i., 10.

a doctrine leading to perfection, and worthy its great Maker; whose design is, to prepare and make us capable even of the Divine nature, and to be where He is, and to behold His glory.

In order to this, and to distinguish us from all other sects and institutions, we are taught by the Christian religion not only to watch over our actions, but our very thoughts; not to repose from corporeal labour, but obliged to employ both body and mind in the service of God; not to lust so much as in our eye, much less in our heart; not to give alms to our own countrymen only, but even to our enemies; not to revenge injuries, but to suffer them. Self-denial and taking up the Cross are lessons which Christians prefer before all the precepts of other religions; and as to the legal, see it all refined in our Saviour's sermon on the Mount. For, indeed, the Mosaic Law, as the Apostle tells us, made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope, by which we draw nigh unto God. And thus, baptism succeeded as a better Covenant; the first only putting away the pollution of the flesh and outward man;[1] the latter, of the spirit and inner man, even (as we said) to the very thoughts and imaginations, to the putting away the body of the sins of the flesh, by which is made a consummate suppletory to that bloody rite.

Thus did our Blessed Saviour not only free the Jews from this uneasy burden, but from all the rest, taking and nailing them to His Cross.[2] What, then, shall we Christians say, on contemplation of our privileges?—

[1] I. Pet., iii., 21; Col. ii., 12. [2] Col., ii., 14.

since, as no other religion has ever proposed such high mysteries, conveyed its truth in so admirable a doctrine, so neither has any such glorious rewards upon such easy terms. So true is that of Aquinas:[1] *Esset omnibus signis mirabilius, si ad credendum tam ardua, ad operandum tam difficilia, et ad sperandum tam alta, mundus absque mirabilibus signis inductus fuisset à simplicibus et ignobilibus hominibus.* Happy, then, are the eyes which see the things which we see! I tell you, (says our Blessed Lord) that many prophets and kings have desired to see these things, and have not seen them; and to hear these things which we hear, and have not heard them.[2]

4. THE MAHOMETAN.

Consider we next the *Mahometan.* Like that of the Pagan religion, they placed it in success and outward prosperity, judging by the event, and as it answers their worldly interests and temporal greatness; by arms and conquests; which, if an argument of truth, Alexander, Cæsar, and Tamerlane had been the founders of the best, because the most tyrannous and bloody; whilst the Christian glories in suffering in a just and righteous cause, nor can be induced to think the worse of his profession, for not prospering in this world; nor can he be compelled to abandon his faith, or change his sacred belief, whatever become of his outward concerns. He triumphs over the cross, and is never more a conqueror than in the midst of adversity. Besides the false prophecies of this impostor, his doctrine consists in

[1] Cont. Gent., l. i., c. 6. [2] Luke, x., 23, 24.

violence, ambition, prodigious and sensual pleasures, unworthy the name of religion.

5. SCEPTICISM CONSIDERED.

Come we, then, last of all, to our sceptic politician—the wary man, who doubts of all, and believes nothing but what he sees and touches. But we have made it appear how frivolous their demands are, and how unreasonable. The Machiavelists and Hobbians, and whoever else would be legislators, or give rules and precepts for the government of the world, are fain to suppose and recommend a religion, though it be a false and absurd one, as an ingredient among their politics; without which they are at a loss. Nor did ever any state or kingdom subsist without some religion, and the nearer that came to the Christian, ever the more prosperous; as might be demonstrated, not only through the Bible, but the histories of the ages since. Of this, Constantine, Charlemagne, Queen Elizabeth, &c., are conspicuous instances; and wherever it has been otherwise among the reformed, it has proceeded from a decay of zeal in the governors, their ill example, remissness, mingling or conniving with the corruptions of false religions, and advancing men of unsound or pernicious principles, as woeful experience shows us.

Hence that indifference for the truth, that shifting about and joining in affinities for secular ends; hence all the persecutions, perfidious acts, and oppressions amongst the potentates of this world. They will not

trust Almighty God, and rely upon His Providence, and the just and holy, the innocent and excellent rules which the Scripture and religion of Christ has recommended. And this, if they would observe, nothing were more easy than what they now are fain to support with all the wicked policies imaginable. There would be no rebellions, no war, no suits of law, no wants; nothing but obedience, peace, justice, and charity, and all the blessings of which the nature of men on earth were capable. So that all other religions, but the true Christian, are but the monstrous productions of men of craft, who, by nourishing them in ignorance and superstition, impose upon the credulous world. Whereas, the Christian is the production only of simple-dealing and disinterested men. The politician regards the people, for the most part, but as slaves to the mighty; whilst the true Christian esteems every one his brother without distinction, and accounts that the soul of the most despicable, in the eye of the world, is as precious to God as that of the greatest prince, and much the happier. With God is no respect of persons. So far is the Christian religion from this worldly policy, which looks on all religion as a mere tool, and expedient to keep mankind in fear and subjection; whilst the other enjoins us to obey, not only for fear, but for conscience' sake; and than this there can be no firmer obligation, as appears in their constant readiness to lay down and sacrifice their lives for the faith, which they profess to God-ward; and fidelity to their prince, when (though under cruel and persecuting pagans) it had

been easy for them to shake off the yoke, and vanquish the whole power of the empire itself.

In like manner, when eloquence, rhetoric, and all other adulatory and politic arts, apt to persuade, were abased to flattery, and to palliate designs to the prejudice of the truth, and came to nothing; the cunning men could never long bear up against the holy simplicity, where it was conducted by a sincere, upright, undisguised meaning and intention. All other religions flatter and soothe our corruptions, passions, and ungovernable lusts; the Christian is severe and nice, even to very thought and the most secret inclinations, which never any other religion took notice of. No mental reservation, no breaking of faith and promises, no versatility; but a constant, uniform progress in virtues and maxims, and whose politics will be found more prudent than the sublimest craft, more powerful than any secular grandeur, more efficacious than custom; in a word, something stronger than nature and all the world besides. It scorns to divert to shifts and cowardly stratagems; but purifies the very thoughts and inward man, and reforms the outward. It rectifies natural perverseness, breaks and supplies the stubborn and uncompliant, and alters even the very constitution; proposing an invariable rule, it sets up an impartial judge to be witness of all our actions, thoughts, and words, approving or condemning what we do well or ill. Nor does it even suffer us to be in quiet, till it has wrought out all that offends, and which is not nicely honest and sincere — prying into our darkest recesses,

and setting our faults as naked before us as if they were in the eye of the meridian sun; so that the true Christian is as careful of what appears not to the eye of men, as what they every day behold.

The Heathens, indeed, forbade actual adultery (and so do other false religions), but yet committed it. They sometimes punished the external act; Christians, the very thought of it; they in the fear of the eyes of other men; the Christian in awe of his own conscience.

6. ATHEISM.

But the *Atheist* is still behind, and is not convinced at all. The politician makes use of religion for his own ends; but this man defies all religion, and believes none at all. He believes no farther than he sees, and is sometimes so stupid as not to give credit to his own senses. Demonstration is *his* God; and, when it is made out to him, he denies the conclusion.

Had we only that plain and impartial way of delivering the doctrine of the Gospel, without flourish of rhetorical persuasion, it were enough to acquit it of imposture, or other design than of making us good and holy. We find the very authors who preached it so far from pride as to relate their own infirmities, and some of them shameful miscarriages, without any motive; concealing nothing of the poverty, ignominy, and little value the world had of their Lord and Master; but declaring how meanly He was born into the world, how poorly He lived, how wretchedly he suffered; which a setter-up of a new religion would have taken care to hide.

But His design was none of this; so careful He was to avoid all popularity and reputation from the greatest miracles that were ever done among the sons of men. They said nothing yet of any stratagem He used, to deliver Himself from the perfidious man who betrayed Him; nor any miracles He wrought to elude his persecutors, and escape the cross; which, doubtless, had been the more probable way, in all human opinion, to have celebrated His fame, and gotten Him proselytes. But His disciples honestly tell the world how tamely He was taken, betrayed, led away, bound, scourged, mocked, and at last crucified like a slave, leaving His disciples and followers exposed to the same disgraces and difficulties. Had not His religion been true and from Heaven, impossible would it have been to have been so universally planted and received by learned, scrupulous, and considerate men; a Doctrine so contrary to the opinions and prejudices of men, and the religion so long established; a religion so averse to flesh and blood, so hated, published by such mean people, without craft, eloquence, or human learning. But that it should, with once telling a naked story, proselyte such multitudes of men, of all sorts and interests—rich, noble, great, learned, and so unlikely to be imposed upon; to so far prevail, as to abandon all those circumstances, to embrace it with the hazard of their lives, without evident advantage, either of glory, riches, or power; but, instead of these, ignominy and the last of worldly sufferings:—is it, I say, credible that men should lose whatsoever is dear to us in this world for

the most exquisite tortures which cruel men could invent in defence of a lie?

How, then, is it possible we should mistrust the integrity of these honest and faithful witnesses whose writings have passed down to us as theirs, from the first age they were penned in, and quoted by so many learned, holy, and inquisitive persons from the time of the Apostles to our own? And why did none who lived and writ other books and passages near that age never once contradict the forgery, had there any been?

Nor rest we on the bare report of Christians only, but even of the very Heathen—some of them notorious enemies, and near that time; none of whom had the impudence to deny any of our Saviour's miracles as matters of fact, though attributing them to natural causes or magical arts. Indeed, the Gospel is as stupendous in its propagation the first century; but so (as the Atheists say) has the Mahometan been. But it is then to be considered how different the means have been which introduced them! The Christian religion, by meekness and suffering; the Turkish, by rebellion and arms; the Christian religion, by renouncing the world and the pleasures of this life; the Mahometan, by force and fraud, to possess the world and the enjoyment of all its delights here, and promising more exalted sensual pleasures hereafter. It is also considerable, that the Christian religion was not born with the professors of it; but learned and received from credible persons, after Christ's Ascension, who sealed their faith with their blood; and that such a person there was as

Christ, and He put to death by their predecessors, the Jews universally to this day acknowledge. This was long since noted by St. Augustine, about the recension of that ancient tax, when Cyrenius was governor. In the mean time, plainly surprising it is, that those who, beholding the miracles our Blessed Saviour did, and thinking of nothing but temporal prosperity, expecting every moment when their Messiah should come and deliver their nation from the Roman yoke, and set up His pompous kingdom, should hear of nothing from Him but a doctrine of sufferings, and at last see Him nailed, like an impostor and a slave, to the Cross (a death accursed by their own law), and all their hopes and expectations blasted on the sudden; and, consequently, (in a manner) quite giving over their late confidence, should immediately, in the height of the disappointment (in which all their hopes were, in a manner, dead and buried), faint-hearted, preach up a fable, that they must needs foresee would prove so dangerous; to assert Him to be a God, raised from the dead, and His deadly wounds, to life, whom the whole city and country saw publicly executed; and so accuse the Sanhedrim and Supreme Council of murdering the Messiah, and persist in all this to the death;—that, I say, after all these contradictions, they should be so mad as to believe wise and learned men would give any credit to what they affirmed.

All this yet was true, and hitherto has no doubt as to fact. Their speaking several languages, untaught and on the sudden (by which these truths were propagated),

was so evident, that the sound of it was heard over almost all the several nations under the Roman empire. And the doctrine evangelized was so new and admirable a moral and sublime philosophy, that their very enemies were in admiration of its purity, far exceeding what had been taught them in their schools; simple fishers and very idiots, confounding all the politer and choice learning of the most flourishing academies; reducing both Jewish, Pagan, and profane religions to the doctrine of the Gospel, which spake of nothing more than poverty, shame, prisons, chains, scourges, fire and sword, to the embracers of it. If, then, this religion had been false, it would have found few desirous to embrace it. But thus did the Christian religion prevail against all these prejudices, and its truth was confirmed by miracles, many of them done for several years after our Lord's Ascension, in the sight of its greatest enemies. And this new Institution baffled all the power and malice of Satan, and withstood the derision of the strongest wits, the disputes of gainsayers, and the cruelty of tyrants.

To this let us add the Prophecies of the Old Testament, which went so long before; the dispersion of the Jewish nation; the silence of devilish oracles; the holy lives, wonderful charity, constancy and suffering of martyrs and confessors; the Father's testimony of His Son, and the truth of His mission, when at Jordan; and on the Holy Mount, when that voice came from Heaven, heard by those present; and, above all, its operations upon the hearts and lives of men to sanctifi-

cation, peace of conscience, and abundant consolation of those who received it.[1] Nor may we here pass by the uninterrupted succession of His followers, the holy Bishops and others, from the Apostles to this day; all whose names we find diligently recorded and transmitted, averring the same doctrine and faith as were primarily received from Christ our Lord himself: which no other false religion ever could do.

Eusebius names the particular Churches which they planted and presided over, and their authentic letters still extant to his time. To these he sends the heretics and incredulous for conviction, as well as for their innovations; and this from indubitable authors, St. Clement, Polycarp, Ignatius, and others; whose genuine writings are abundantly vindicated, and the conversation of Polycarp with St. John, Irenæus with Polycarp, Philotinus, Papias, Quadratus, Aristides, Ægesippus, and others; giving all irrefragable testimony of the same faith and religion, as persons themselves familiar and contemporary with the Apostles, or with those who were. All these particulars, concurring in such a cloud of witnesses, must needs evince the truth and excellency of the Christian religion against all shadow of reasonable contradiction and infidelity.

[1] Their own books (namely, of the Jews) pointed so evidently to the Messiah, at this time of general expectation among them, that, to encounter the impossibilities of not owning the Lord Jesus to be Him, they are forced to admit of a double Messiah, one suffering, another triumphant. Their earnest hopes of one at that period, —which the preaching of John the Baptist confirms, and their curious questioning of that holy man,—they themselves acknowledge.

And now, as for those who for all this will take nothing, save what they have mathematical demonstrations for. All that can be said to such is, that they are most brutishly unreasonable; since other evidence in things of this nature neither need nor ought to be given; and men must either believe very little, or nothing at all, that has passed these five thousand years before them; and would deservedly be looked on as the most impertinent of mankind to require all that has been done and acted, to be repeated every generation, and to every individual person born all that tract of time. There is no one action which has been performed during all that great revolution, which is able to produce so clear a testimony of the truth of it, as what the Sacred Scriptures have handed to us. For there are in nature but two ways of conciliating the belief of a thing past, and compelling assent—miracles and tradition. As to the former, we have shown the unreasonableness, rather madness, to exact them daily (though such great and even stupendous ones daily manifest themselves, of which, for all that, we take no regard, nor are at all the better for, by reason of the commonness of them, such as, for instance, the effects of God's ordinary Providence in the works of His hands). What a frenzy were it for every one, born and baptized during so many successive generations, to call for miracles, till he were pleased to believe the Holy Scriptures, and that there is a God,—who has Moses and the Prophets, namely, the Word of Truth thus asserted! For, were this the method, miracles would no more be mira-

cles, than the diurnal revolution of the sun, the growth and specification of plants and animals, the attraction of the magnet, and the like, which we daily pass over, without the least reflection.

Sufficient, therefore, it is, that miracles there were, to convince those who saw them, and establish the veracity of their Author, and the religion which they were shown to confirm, and by which our forefathers were induced to believe, and to worship the true God, as the faith is in Jesus.

If Faith, and Hope, and daily experience, be not sufficient demonstration, let us no more believe any of the ancient historians, orators, and poets, were the authors of those works which pass under their names. Let us no more send out ships to the Indies for traffic, for we never conversed with the men, nor saw those countries. But that which is the support and very life of the world, Commerce, and of enlarging the empire of mankind, and of civilizing barbarous nations, of planting the true religion, and whatever else may be the product of industry, must cease; and we be but a miserable society of men, inactive and good for nothing, without acquiescence in a moral persuasion, and that all our ancestors had not universally agreed to deceive their posterity. We cannot think it reasonable, that actions, and facts, and things that are past, should be summoned to be reacted for the satisfaction of every curious impertinent, and to render the power and goodness of the Great and Tremendous God cheap and despicable.

Whilst, then, even by human faith we doubt not of

many things we never saw, why should we question the faith of the Gospel?[1] The validity of every testimony is grounded on the authority of the testifier, and that authority founded on his ability and integrity; and divine faith must be an assent to something as credible upon the testimony of God; for, if we receive the witness of man, as in most concerns we do, the witness of God is greater.[2]

We have often shown how unreasonable it is to require such kind of proofs for things, of which the nature of those things is utterly incapable: and such are many most certain and indubitable truths. Nor are all capable of the same kind of evidence (though of others as true) as colour to be heard, as is a sound; nor sound be seen, but colour may. Thus, the abstracted nature of mathematical conclusions may be demonstrated to sense, by most undeniable proofs; but so may not things (though perhaps as evident), which are not of the same nature, but depend on other circumstances. Such are things out of our prospect and reach, as God, and spirits, and the souls of men. One may indeed undoubtedly believe some things, which may yet possibly be otherwise; as one may certainly believe he was

[1] Non dicant, (says St. Augustine) non credimus, quia non videmus; quoniam si hæc dicant, coguntur fateri incertos sibi esse parentes suos. — "Beware of saying, 'we do not believe because we do not see;' for by this rule you will be forced to own it doubtful whether those whom you call your parents are really so."

[2] I. John, v., 9.

born of such a mother, at such a time, &c.; though he can have no other evidence, than that so he was told by credible people. He, therefore, who will believe nothing, because it is possible something may be otherwise, is an intolerable and fantastic sceptic, and a fit object both of pity and derision, and such are justly to be given up to eternal perplexity. There were no place nor reward for the virtue and grace of faith of ingenuous and free obedience, if all that we are required to believe were mathematically cogent. All wise men generally incline to that which is most probable, though perhaps not absolutely certain. Reward and punishment belong to free agents, and to such as believe, not those who see only; but such are blessed who have not seen, and yet believe.[1] In a word, then, as to demonstration, there is nothing more evident than that in which the Universal Church, in all ages, places, and communions, unanimously and generally consented to; and we may be as well assured of it, as in all the lines and figures of Euclid.

Let us then humbly submit and believe. For what though the mysteries of our most holy faith be many of them higher than we, narrow souls, can comprehend, the most learned and profoundly searching must, after all, acknowledge their ignorance of innumerable things. We know not what eternity is, infinite space, the manner and necessity of the existence of matter, and the like. In the mean time, how many things do we acquiesce in, and exercise our faith upon, without

[1] John, xx., 29.

all this scrutiny and ado? Though we daily eat and drink, yet shall we never certainly comprehend how nutrition is performed, nor the causes of a thousand effects. It is the miracle of the Christian religion to make us happy by obliging us to renounce ourselves, and we are then the most knowing and perfect when we know nothing but God, and what He has revealed, which is Christ crucified. This was St. Paul's profession, joy, and exultation, and should be ours. Did we attain to this humility, all these difficulties of believing without ocular demonstration would vanish, and we should no more wonder that we do not comprehend the nature of God, or His manner of knowledge and acting, His eternity, immensity, and other (to us) incommunicable attributes, but rather be astonished that such despicable atoms as we are, worms and dust, should be so graciously considered, and honoured with the manifestation of the God incarnate; and what He has done to redeem lost man, and raise him to the glories of a future and blessed state with Himself, after we are crumbled into dust.

Thrice happy and blessed were it for the world, that the belief of a Deity and the faith of the Christian religion were as well practised, as known and proved; it having more need of deep and sober consideration to produce obedience and holy life, than farther evidence. The world has had the experience and universal suffrage of more than six thousand years for the one, and of almost seventeen hundred for the other, who have all confessed, by deplorable effects, that the present gratifi-

cation of our corrupt senses and animal part, even in their highest circumstances, is not the *summum* or absolute satisfaction even of any one sense, which sinners pretend to please, seeing they perish in the enjoyment, and leave remorse and a sting behind. Men will not so believe, as to live and reform. They experimentally find that all vice whatsoever (the product of infidelity) leads in the end most certainly to destruction; but yet every one will make trial himself, and go through the same foolish vain course. None will believe his father, none, his grandfather, nor the confession of millions who are gone before them, and have all acknowledged and deplored it, when too late. Every one will be making the same essay, and seek for satisfaction in sense, as the foolish chymist does to find the philosopher's elixir, till they have consumed all, and undone themselves in the search. They labour in the fire, and weary themselves in pursuit of vanity, as if none had ever yet been deceived. Had the itch and impatience of trial (for want of faith) been the mistake of the first age only,[1] it were the more to be deplored and pitied; but that a race of men should persist in this infidelity, is both sad and ridiculous. But so is a great part of the world miserably infatuated; and whilst they believe not the true and real substance, are deluded by the shadow. They walk, as holy David tells us, in a vain umbrage, disquieting themselves to no purpose. Their days are fugitive, and fly away like a dream, when one awaketh. Their strength is only labour and sorrow;

[1] Mr. Howe, on the Blessedness of Righteousness.

whether they rise up early, and late take rest; they seek for it in trouble, and even life in death. As an ox to the slaughter, or a fool to the correction of the stocks, they go blindly and obstinately on, till a dart strike through their liver; they descend silently to the chambers of death, not so much as vouchsafing a thought of whither they are going for eternity. They dream of nothing save earthly paradises, till they find themselves in flames inextinguishable, and the dreadful gulf. These things has the Almighty, together with the blessed means of avoiding these miseries and being eternally happy, declared and revealed in the Christian religion, by His Word, the Prophets and Apostles, and by the concomitant testimony of all the wise and excellent persons that ever lived. But who hath believed their report? Nothing will satisfy, but sensible touch and demonstration.

7. CONCLUSION.

Thus have we seen the weakness and unreasonableness of all the considerable pretenders to advance their religion above the Christian; the philosopher deifying virtue, to set and exalt his wise man above Jupiter, and dispute felicity with the gods; the Pagan, fond of his abominable rites; the Jewish abrogated and at an end; and the very best of them defective, unsatisfactory, and short of the Christian, which alone has refined, reformed, and reduced the abased world to the true and genuine object of our faith. It has shown the madness of some, the folly of others, and weakness of all besides the Christian, and convinced the politic Atheist and

doubting sceptic, that the faith we profess, and the Scriptures which reveal it, can be no other than the truth of God.

Some of the more enlightened Heathen, it is true, were for a more exalted worship, even of their Gods—*Ut eos purâ, integrâ, incorruptâ mente veneremur*, which showed the universal necessity of it, and that they had never attained it. But, when it pleased God to reveal His Son, and shine upon the world with the evangelical light, it immediately dissipated this mist of ignorance, abolished both the Jewish rites and Pagan superstition, turning their carnal sacrifices and impure services into spiritual, and instead of blindness and error in manners and worship, substituted the principles of that truth which God had seated in the conscience, to the production of the graces of love, charity, humility, wisdom, and the rest of those evangelical virtues, which do all of them receive their sense and vigour from the power and efficacy of Christ's religion.

The Jews, indeed, had excellent lessons and exhortations expressive of their duty; but for the rest, (except what was moral and eternally obligatory to all mankind) all of it was temporal, local, and transitory, external, and beggarly, as the Apostle styles them, in respect of the doctrine of the Gospel and the precepts of the Messiah. He gives both grace and strength to perform what He commands, and affords the clearest notions of God; ascribing to Himself all conceivable perfection in the most exalted degree; enjoining nothing repugnant to reason, though sometimes proposing

to our faith mysteries above it, and exceeding human comprehension, worthy of the Great God, and which show they could come from no other but God.

The false religions have no rules to guide their votaries by, but the lying oracles of crafty priests, foolish augurs, uncertain traditions, and ridiculous legends, imposed on ignorant people; so that among some of them there was no wickedness and abomination which was not practised in their mysteries, even to offering human sacrifices unto devils; besides other unnatural pollutions, incantations, and barbarous ceremonies and customs which had no relation to virtue or the good of mankind. Whilst the Christian religion receives nothing but from the fountain of all purity, wisdom, and reason, namely, from the oracles of the Living God, so perfectly consummate in all that can render His creatures capable of attaining the Supreme Good, as nothing can be added to or diminished from them, to make them more complete. They answer all the nobler concerns of man, and satisfy his reason as well as his truly natural inclinations, unless vitiated, which it reforms and rectifies. To this is due the prudent government and order which keeps things from dissolution, re-establishing society, and all relations by an union of charity and divine love, in a degree far exceeding all the precepts and dictates of all other the most celebrated institutions, which but loose the reins of passion, ambition, cruelty, lust, vain-glory, and other vices: whilst the Christian, subduing these exorbitances, obsequious to government and good order, and guiding all

his actions with moderation, is still the same in all times and places, solicitous for nothing but that he may be continually improving himself and others. Thus, he surmounts the temptations of the world, and triumphs over all that may hinder his progress to heavenly perfection, even to the despising of death and torments, as supernaturally animated. And all this, without arms of secular violence, the eloquence of words, and other arts and stratagems, than the dart of truth and the invincible virtue of his profession.

The Christian, indeed, considered in his outward man, is a finite creature; but, as to his better condition and interior, as much above the rest of mankind, (however great and illustrious they shine in external circumstances and royal titles) as the faith he professes is transcendant above all others in the world. He places his thoughts and aims beyond the infinite space, and, whilst he has nothing, possesses all, as heir to Him who created all. Crowns and sceptres are in His esteem trifles of no value, who descends from His throne, to converse with the poorest beggar; and, being so in spirit, is exalted even to the height of preferment, looking at what the world admires, as gilded dreams. And however elevated in outward circumstances, to which the veneration of men is due, he is still himself no greater than he ever was, but for the opportunities he has of doing more good, and God more service. He that would diminish these from a great, good man, cannot make him either the less great or good.

Thus, the Christian mounts above all he sees, to

humble himself to the God he never saw, yet believes and loves. Thus born, and taught, and living in time, he learns and lives to eternity, when time shall be no more.

Never, never had it been known, that the way to happiness had been the Cross; that humility and poverty of spirit would lead to these heights; that to love and embrace our enemies and those who hate us, were to cultivate a moral virtue and real magnanimity; that to rejoice in affliction, was a serious advice and way to true content: that our thoughts were to be as pure and nice as our actions. Never did doctrines like these enter into the imagination of the most famous legislators renowned for their precepts and establishments; never did philosopher, statesman, or politician, found his sect or commonwealth on rules so contradictory to theirs, and the paradigms of the morosest stoic. But these are the maxims of the humble fishermen, and the doctrine taught them by the Author of Immortality, and the religion which we worthily advance and prefer.

Would you see more clearly how to attain the bliss it leads to? Pull out your eyes. Would you take hold of eternal life? Cut off the hand. Would you be happy? Renounce yourself. To be rich, covet nothing; to defend yourself from insults, render good for evil. To live in peace, bless your persecutors. Rare precepts, one would think, to recommend for the choice of one's religion! Indeed, her votaries are not many, and her dictates more rarely practised among the sages of the world and the authors of other religions.

But all these are the real and necessary lessons of the Christian school, and the weapons by which it has overcome the world; the graces of humility, simplicity, poverty of spirit, abjectness in our own esteem; the becoming lambs, doves, little children in malice, servants of others, has placed the Christian throne above all principalities and powers of the earth, yea, above the highest angels in heaven; for it has exalted our nature to the Throne of God.

And all this, yet without debasing its votaries, or rendering them less noble, but arguing their greatest courage, fortitude, prudence, and wisdom that the creature can attain to; and he accounts it the highest honour, because his Saviour has dignified it by His example, and vindicated the reasonableness of it by its glorious effects. Whilst He commands us to be innocent as doves, He bids us not be stupid, but wise as serpents; not negligent, but circumspect in our actions; not lazy and slothful, but diligent and sedulous in our callings; not to faint and give over, but to be invincible in our sufferings; not base and sordid, but honourable in our dealings, and to provide things decent. Thus sanctifying all our thoughts, actions, and conversations, and twisting them with our duty. What security and assurance, what an antepast of the life of heaven, does the Christian enjoy, who, thus living and conversing, thus loving and relying on God, is filled with the expectation and assurance of an eternal reward! He fears no loss who considers that, though all things here fleet and pass away, yet his God is a Rock of Ages,

still the same both in Himself and to Him. In solitude God is near, to be with him; in company, to entertain him; in health, to preserve him; in sickness, to be his Physician; in adversity, to comfort and relieve him; and even in death, to give him life, that shall never end; and, in the mean time, he beholds and entertains the troubles and afflictions he endures as but chastisements of a father for his benefit, marks of filiation, and proofs of his patience and perseverance.

Thus, as the Christian religion is beneficial to every individual, it is no less so to the public and community. His charity is as diffusive as the sunbeams. What philosophy, what polity, what religious institution, among all the catalogues of professors, can challenge equal privileges, or answer this character, or has obtained, prevailed, and lived so long in reputation, done such things amidst such contradictions, and made so many disciples, that would die for its Author? Apollonius Thyanæus was, after all his juggling and pretences, but a vain-glorious pedant; Simon Magus brake his neck in showing tricks; Mahomet was an epileptic lying impostor, whose rise and crimes are notorious; the Jewish religion, scant and short of perfection; the nation infinitely miserable and under a curse; and all other sects and heresiarchs dwindled to nothing. So that there is no need of any further argument to advance the pre-eminence of the Christian religion, so universally obtaining and embraced. So that, reflecting on the several infirmities and events of all professions but the Christian, we may, with holy David, with con-

fidence pronounce it of the Christian faith, "I have seen an end of all perfection; but thy commandment is exceeding broad."[1]

We have spoken of the agreeableness of the precepts of the Christian religion with the common and universal notions of human nature, which ought to be a demonstration of its excellency. For does any other religion pretend miracles? Be assured, if its doctrine do not withal declare its worth, it is all but imposture and to be rejected; yea, though an angel from heaven should descend to proclaim it. If the person also of him who is patron of it be not more than man, no Numa, no Minos, no Mahomet is to be hearkened to. If the rewards are not pure and spiritual, as well as the doctrine, it is to be refused. The Christian religion is transcendant in all this; the dignity of the Author, God — not man alone; the doctrine of a tenour that no other religion ever proposed, or could hope to propagate upon such admirable and unthought-of methods. Such is the sacrifice of broken hearts, depending on Providence, charity to enemies, forgiving injuries, self-abnegation, martyrdom, and suffering for the truth, and a thousand contradictions to flesh and blood.

Our Saviour tells His disciples what they were to expect in this life—the hatred of all men, nay, of their very parents and nearest relations for the sake of their Lord and Master; the meanness of whose birth they set down, nor sparing their own infirmities. Then, for miracles, beyond any we ever heard of performed by

[1] Ps. cxix., 96.

others. Never were any that approached them. The wind and seas obey Him; yea, death itself is vanquished. Men, hell, devils acknowledge His power; and the wonders which He does are in all the parts of nature; and this before thousands, not in corners, but in the famous Temple, the most populous cities, in the house, the wide field, at land and sea, and every where manifesting His Divine power.

Then, for Prophecy. He foretells the progress of this doctrine, the destruction of Jerusalem, the renown of Mary Magdalen's pious profession, His own death and resurrection. We find His miraculous conception and the circumstances of His birth foretold by angels, confirmed and honoured by the wise men. To this add His glorious transfiguration. The fulfilling of every tittle predicted of Him by the Prophets, and that so particularly by David, and Isaiah, and Daniel, as if they had been present at their completion, even to the vinegar and the gall, and the dividing of His garments at His crucifixion.

When we shall then seriously consider the severe contradiction through which the holy Jesus went, to propagate and establish what He came to propose to the world, in a period when it was so corrupted with vice, is it possible to conceive that these had been arguments to attract His followers, had they not been true; had not His doctrine been from heaven, though Himself might not possibly have carried the reputation of these things during His own life, which was not long upon the earth, and as He was not conversing with the

world above two or three years? That His disciples, and those whom they converted, should retain the same power, and proceed so mightily in word and deed, is plainly astonishing. Consider the effect of St. Peter's first sermon; five thousand made Christians at one time! that admirable and sublime discourse concerning the Resurrection; that a chained prisoner should make his Judge to tremble on the tribunal;[1] the boldness of the persecuted Apostles, the zeal of Stephen, and other confessors and martyrs! Seducers do not use to flatter in such terms. And where had these ignorant fishermen these sublime speculations—this doctrine of regeneration, such as was our Blessed Saviour's with the woman of Samaria, in which there was nothing of human, nothing but Divine? For so even the censorious Scribes and proud Pharisees were astonished at His doctrine.[2] For He taught them as one having authority, and never man spake like Him, though they came, with all the prejudices imaginable, to contradict what He said, yet found they no cause they could take hold of.

The power of the truth, even by these weak and despicable means and instruments, in the sight of the world, did greater things than all the Alexanders, Cæsars, and heroes by fire and sword, than all the orators by their admired harangues, than all the politicians by all their worldly wisdom.

Lastly, consider we this religion as to its end and design, which is only to make men better, and reform their lives by principle and example; the whole lan-

[1] Acts, xxiv., 25. [2] Matt., vii., 28, 29.

guage and predication of the Gospel being but to amend men's lives. And how is it possible that impostors (without any appearance of self ends) should make it their sole employment, with the utmost hazard of their lives, (than which nothing is more precious) to render men good and holy; and that there should continue so long a succession of men persevering through such exquisite torments, to propagate and promote virtue and sanctity of life. Doubtless, few other religions aim at any such ends, or could expect such success. Self-love, self-conceit, ambition, and the desire of enjoying earthly pleasure, may induce men to make use of expedients of force and fraud, to serve their carnal advantages; but never was it seen, since the world began, that holiness, charity, humility, and all those shining virtues which the Christian doctrine proposed, took that course to recommend and establish itself. No religion but the Christian inspected the heart, and bent all its forces to eradicate the innate corruptions which reign within. They only judged, by the outward appearance, that men were good or evil, without at all concerning the interior, which inclines them to all those disorders that render them obnoxious to the displeasure of God. And this is plain by what our Blessed Master perstringes so sharply in the precisest sect of the Pharisees, those painted sepulchres, who, above all the rest of the Jews' religionaries, thought themselves the most unblameable, and passed for the holiest professors.

To conclude: it is certain that what God has made was for His glory only, and the communication of His

boundless goodness. Nor can we conceive how He should receive the glory so justly due to Him, but from the chief and most intellectual of His creatures; by whom He does receive, as it were, the glory of all the rest of His inferior creatures made to serve Him. Nor does the Almighty think this enough, without the communication of His own beatitude, which is the consummation of all the happiness a creature is capable of, and infinitely more than it can comprehend, with supernatural grace. To attain this, God has given us His word, laws, commands, example, worthy His goodness and other attributes. And the observance of these is called *Religion;* and this religion, proceeding but from One, must needs also be but One; and that coming from God alone, and approving what is most perfect (He himself being so), that religion can be no other than the Christian, because that religion alone contains in it all the characters of perfection. It is so pure, as not to suffer the least spot or sulliage. It condemns evil thoughts, and so much as imaginations, before they come to action. It works out every fibre and appearance of evil; and has for its reward the highest recompence of eternal felicity. And that there are, for all this, so many who live contrary to its sacred maxims, is no dishonour to it, but rather enhances and declares its excellency; and by infinite blessings which it bestows upon the sincere embracer of it, the decided preference it challenges above all religions whatsoever. For, as we have shown, very obscure was the prospect of any thing, above the enjoyment of the present, to the Jews:

plentiful harvests and vintages, breeds of cattle, long life and posterity, victory over enemies, peace and safety at home, so that a famous sect among them looked no farther than this life's duration.

And for the Heathen, the wisest and most early of them, Chaldeans, Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans,—though they had, by their own reasoning, and from the consideration of the soul of man, and the unequal distribution and events of things in this world, and that all creatures, save mankind, had all their natures were capable of,—presumed that there was something behind and to come, which should even the soul fully satisfy. Yet of this they were in doubt, as we find by the writings of these great men, Socrates, Cicero, Seneca, &c.; and the felicity of the stoics, and the *summum bonum* of the rest, consisting either in sensual enjoyments, proper for this uncertain life only, and such as brutes enjoy.

Whereas, the Christian, sincerely living a Christian, looks as far beyond all this as Heaven is from Earth, and to a place as different as light is from darkness, as eternity from one moment; formed of the most exalted perfection of all the soul and body can fancy desirable, or can be capable of, as vigour, health, beauty, knowledge, self-satisfaction, immortality; and, to comprehend all in one, the vision, fruition, and contemplation of God Himself in Christ, in and with whom is all happiness consummate, beyond all that mortal man can desire or possibly conceive.

CHAPTER XI.

OF THE DECADENCE AND CORRUPTION OF RELIGION; THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION ESPECIALLY.

SECTION I. OF THE GRADUAL CORRUPTION OF RELIGION, FROM THE CREATION TO THE GIVING OF THE LAW, AND THENCE TILL CHRIST.

SECTION II. OF THE DECADENCE OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION, FROM ITS INSTITUTION BY CHRIST AND HIS APOSTLES, TO THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

SECTION III. HERESIES AND SECTS, FROM THE REFORMATION TO THE PRESENT TIME.

SECTION IV. OF THE CORRUPTIONS OF THE ROMISH CHURCH.

SECTION I.

OF THE GRADUAL CORRUPTION OF RELIGION, FROM THE CREATION TO THE GIVING OF THE LAW, AND THENCE TO CHRIST.

From the infidelity of some believing nothing at all, as *Atheists;* or others, save what they see, as *Sceptics;* and such as believe amiss, as *Heathens*, *Heretics*, and *Schismatics*, is come so general and universal a decadence and corruption of the True and Evangelical, that is, of the Christian Religion, that, without the extraordinary

Providence and Goodness of God, directing to a serious and partial inquiry and research, it would be extremely difficult, and next almost to impossible, to find out the truth. This, therefore, we shall in this chapter endeavour to bring to light; that, seeing and knowing who they are, and what they pretend, we may both take and give warning, and avoid the danger of being seduced, and escape the peril, as from so many rocks and shelves in such an ocean of errors and impostures.

Being, then, by what has been at large produced, sufficiently assured of the truth, stability, and excellence of our Foundation,—and having dug even to the spring-head, from whence to derive the Faith and Religion we profess and prefer, namely, the Holy Scriptures,—and having next endeavoured to make appear that there never was any saving religion upon which mankind might confidently rely for salvation, besides the Patriarchal, Jewish, and Mosaical of old, revealed in the Old Testament, before our Saviour's Incarnation, and the Christian, instituted by our Saviour, typified by the Old, revealed in the New Testament, planted by the Apostles, and, by their followers, propagated to us.... After a brief and summary recapitulation of all other Pretenders (as having no footsteps of Eternal Truth deducible from the same Divine authority), we shall pass to those Heresiarchs and Doctrines heterodox to the Christian (even among Christians) in its original, primitive, and genuine purity. For, though, as we affirmed, we are sufficiently assured that the Christian Religion is the one true and saving Faith; yet, among

so many bold Pretenders, who go under that denomination, to decide which amongst them is most conformable to that which Christ and His Apostles left and recommended to the world, would prove no small difficulty, without being, in some measure, enabled to compare its doctrine with the rest; and to apply both to the rule of holy Scripture, the only true and infallible touchstone by which to discern what, amongst all these professions, is the safest to rely on.

And, in this recension, we shall (for the better discovery how these many errors crept in) methodize them historically, according to the time of their first springing-up after the tares had been sown by the envious man; whilst men, that is, the guides and governors of the Church, to whom the culture of the vineyard was committed, slept, or were less vigilant.

We have shown how our first parents had their religion from God, in Paradise; an easy observance of a most reasonable injunction, in token of that gratitude and homage they owed to their bountiful and great Creator, for all the enjoyments of health, plenty, and whatsoever desirable felicity the human creature was capable of,—and all this, with an eviternal fruition here in that delicious place, or translation to a yet more glorious. The conditions were, but the abstaining from the fruit of one peculiar tree, tempting to the eye, indeed, but exitial to the taste. The rest consisted in adoration and praises of their Benefactor, the contemplation of His glorious and stupendous works, the culture of the garden (of all diversions the most agreeable

and natural), with the free use and benefit of another Sacramental Tree, that should re-invigorate him upon all occasions.

This was the happy state of mankind, till, hearkening to the seduction of a newly apostate spirit, envious of their felicity, they were prevailed with to violate this test of their obedience, upon the false suggestion of becoming wiser and more happy than the God who made them. This was the first decadence and true original of all the subsequent lapses and corruptions happening in the world. For the nature of man, tainted through this defection in the root and fountain, derived its contagion to the branches; the parents had eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth were set on edge. For, though their posterity had yet the light of nature to direct them, the propensity to evil, upon this weakening fall, was so strong that, though that which might have been known of God was manifest (for God had shown it to them)[1]—the invisible things from the creation of the world being easily seen and understood by the things which are made, even His eternal power and Godhead,—they became without excuse.

Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God; neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened; professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, changing the glory of the Incorruptible and Invisible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and reptiles. Wherefore, God also gave them up to uncleanness, through the lust of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between them-

[1] Rom., i., 19, 20.

selves; who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is God, blessed for ever. Amen!

And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, full of envy and debate, deceit, malignity, whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful; who, knowing the judgment of God (that they who commit such things are worthy of death), not only did the same, but had pleasure in those who did them.

Behold the fruits of the forbidden tree, diffusing an universal corruption, and even extinguishing that natural light which yet was left in the conscience of every man, namely, the necessity of a reasonable, and at least a moral, conversation, though there had been no reward of virtue, or punishment of vice! For the Divine misericord did not utterly abandon our lapsed parents in this condition; but, in pity to their frailty, He was pleased to receive them into grace again, upon a second and better covenant; in the promised seed of whom the Messiah should spring, and in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed; that is, so many as would take hold of this freely offered grace, and, being possessed of it, implore His aid, since without it they were still in danger of falling away again. This, though darkly at the first, was yet communicated to that race of Adam, the most devoted to the worship of their Maker, and from whose loins the promised Messiah was to come. Nor needed they other means to consign the

truth pure and uncorrupt, than the early example of the righteous Abel.

All the world, even the most barbarous of nations, seem to have notions, that crimes were to be purged with bloody sacrifices. This, though true, yet being perverted to the culture of stocks and stones, and accompanied with abominable rites—God justly gave them up to those delusions.

Adam, Seth, Enos, Enoch, Methusalem, Noah, Shem, Abraham, and his posterity, retained the worship of the True God, before the Word was consigned to writing; God likewise, from time to time, appearing to and conversing with them, to declare His immediate pleasure and confirm their faith. And thus they, in like manner, (it is likely) received the Seven Precepts ascribed to Noah, so long observed by the Gentile proselytes.

As to the external form and ministerial part, the first-born of the family, as chief and prince, was also priest; till, families and tribes increasing, and the impatience of paternal animadversion, and from necessity, combining into political societies, they found it expedient to elect them rulers, who, in process of time, became, instead of indulgent fathers, tyrants haughty and full of violence, oppression, rapine, lust, and idolatry, which overspread the face of all the habitable earth.[1]

But now the righteous stock, in danger of being wholly perverted, the same God, of His infinite mercy, mindful of His promises, thought fit to separate a select

[1] Now it was that Nimrod, or Belus, flourished. Some will have him to be the Baal and Jupiter of the Heathens.

people, from whom should come He that should open their blinded eyes, and reduce them from those errors, first, under the Covenant of Circumcision, and to purge and distinguish them from the impious nations, by governing them Himself, under laws and ordinances peculiar to them.

The first and chief of these was the patriarch Abraham, the Father of the Faithful, honoured with that distinguishing title for his signal obedience, in quitting his country and idolatrous relations, depending on God's Providence and faith in His promises, freely offering His Son—a type of Him in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed.

In this family flourished the Church and true religion, till the bondage in Egypt, which patiently enduring for exercise and trial of their faith, they were delivered from it by mighty wonders, under the conduct and government of Moses, and a more settled form and law of ordinances; shadowing under figures a yet more transcendant dispensation, in due time to be revealed. It was now (as we noted) that God, considering the brevity of men's lives and frequent interruptions, caused their oral traditions to be committed to writing, the history of the Creation to be penned by the same Moses, and the moral, ritual, and ceremonial law to be written.[1]

[1] Not that the moral law was not before graven in their hearts, but now first solemnly promulgated and engraven on tables of stone; being no other than the law of nature itself, and might, haply, have been written too before, if what Josephus relates of

As to the Writings of Holy Scripture, whether the Book of Job was more ancient than the Pentateuch (which some think the Work of Moses also) imports no further than to show, that the Gentiles were not altogether ignorant of their duty, however falling and defecting from it; and it gives us an instance of the patience, wisdom, piety, and virtue of one, at least, amongst them, for our example.

But the monstrous corruption and decadence of God's own people, the Jewish Church, is recorded and transmitted to us not only by the Mosaic Writings, but by those of all the Prophets; namely, the monstrous ingratitudes, idolatries, and abominations; their several murmurings, calf-worship in the Wilderness; that of all the tribes under the several judges, and when there was no king in Israel, every one did what was right in his own eyes; when they had kings, by even Solomon himself, Jeroboam, who made Israel to sin, Ahab, Manasseh, and other wicked kings.[1] We have already treated of the history of the Creation, the economy and progress of the Church, and its various dispensations under patriarchs, judges, kings, and the flourishing condition it continued in, till their sins and defection from the commands and law of God moved Him to give them up to several severe captivities, when Esdras

the inscriptions on the pillars at Joppa (the ruins of which he tells us were still to be seen) were insculped by Seth.

[1] This being so plainly historized in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and given an account of in the eight and ninth chapters of this treatise, I shall not need recite at length.

and other prophets and priests instructed them, as they were able, during these dispersions. After this discipline and humiliation, return and restoration, they were again ruled by priests, till Antiochus and the Grecian monarchs and usurpers rendered that title and office venal. This again exposed the true religion to divers innovations and corruptions, especially under Herod and the Roman Presidents, when both priests, scribes, and doctors of the law, exercised ecclesiastical jurisdiction. These, together with the proud and singular Pharisees, increased this corruption by their foolish glosses, additions, and traditions, which broke them into such prodigious sects and heresies, that, impatient of contradiction, and hardened against the truth, they proceeded to that height of wickedness and malice, as to crucify the Lord of Life, the true and (even by them) earnestly expected Messiah, who at this very time came to reform and save the world. Thus, He, who came to abrogate a harder law than any their forefathers could support, and to substitute a more refined and better, take off a heavy yoke they had now lain under two thousand years, to reform their lives and save their souls, was rejected and set at nought. They blasphemed His doctrines, His miracles, and all the gracious methods He used, against the most evident conviction; so that, provoking God to the utmost, He gave them up to that final deplorable destruction, and maledictions invoked upon them and their children, under which they remain an accursed people, and example of God's displeasure to this day.

SECTION II.

OF THE DECADENCE OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION, FROM ITS INSTITUTION BY CHRIST AND HIS APOSTLES, TO THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

The sad defection and catastrophe of the Jewish Church made way for the Christian religion, taught by the late martyred Saviour and Messiah; and who was no other than what their Scripture and prophets foretold was to succeed, and to be the consummation of what their law shadowed under types and figures; unfolding the mysteries till now veiled and wrapped up in that of ordinances, and pointing out to us the way to eternal life, breaking down the partition-wall which separated the Gentiles from the Holy of Holies, and reducing into one both Jew and Gentile, under one, namely, the Lord Jesus, the Saviour of the world.[1]

But long it was not ere the old serpent and enemy of mankind, more envenomed than ever, as feeling the press of that heel which was come to break his head, bent all his forces, not only to oppose, but corrupt the heavenly doctrine, and to proseminate his curious cockles, dissensions and factions, and heterodox and (some of them) blasphemous opinions in this goodly plantation, preached by our Blessed Saviour, planted and propagated by His Apostles, and now universally prevailing with incredible and miraculous progress. For,

[1] How the Primitive Christians lived under this dispensation, see in Acts, iv., 32, &c.; and with what love, charity, union, agreement, zeal, and community of goods.

in process of time, the Church, according to our Blessed Saviour's promise and prediction, emerging out of many persecutions, and being so stupendously victorious, that kings and queens became its nursing fathers and mothers, growing rich and opulent, the lusts and ambition of men, perverting guides and governors, covetousness, sloth, ignorance did so overspread,—impostors and crafty persons so pollute it with false doctrines,—that within less than sixty years after our Saviour's Ascension, no fewer than seven famous churches, planted by the Apostles in Asia, were tainted with divers errors, mentioned and perstringed by St. John in the Apocalypse: so early did the mystery of iniquity begin to work.

I. HERESIES AND SECTS OF THE FIRST CENTURY.

Nicolaitans, from one Nicolaus, (about the reign of Domitian) one of the seven deacons mentioned by St. Luke in the Acts of the Apostles.[1]

It was an illiterate sect who would have wives in common, and who were a sort of Adamites, a species of Gnostics in many particulars. They held the world to spring from light and darkness in conjunction; that the angels created this inferior globe. They also used very barbarous mysteries and impurities.

Simon Magus, or the famous Magician, who the Scriptures tell us would have purchased the gifts of the Holy Ghost, healing, and tongues with money.[2] This not succeeding, he denies the sacred Trinity, gives himself out to be God, or some great and mighty power;

[1] Acts, vi., 5. [2] Acts, viii., 18.

held that angels and intelligences created the world; denied also the Resurrection, and that God was unknown to the patriarchs, and is said, after all his cheats, to have broken his neck, pretending to fly in the air, and so up to heaven, before the people at Rome; and that, when St. Peter was there, by whose prayers he was precipitated.[1] He was certainly the original of many impostors, both before (as some think) Nicholas, and after him; as *Menander*, a scholar of his, who styled himself a saviour of mankind, and baptized in his own name. *Ebion*, who denied the Deity of Christ, held it unlawful to eat flesh; of all the Gospels, admitted St. Matthew only; retained Circumcision. His sectators were the San, who pretended divers other gospels, as that of Eve, which they called Evangelium Perfectionis.

The *Nazarenes*, an enthusiastical sect, who pretended to certain dreams of Noah's wife, and that she set the Ark five times on fire whilst it was building, and that it was as often repaired.

Cerinthus, a Jew, (about the time of St. John's exile) taught that Christians ought to be circumcised, denied the eternity of a future life; but that, instead thereof, there should be a thousand years of sensual pleasure for the saints. This impure wretch, coming into a bath where the Evangelist St. John was washing, the holy man immediately went out of it. He had to his disciple a false prophet, called *Eluxia*.

[1] See Euseb. Eccles. Hist., l. ii., c. 13. I know the latter part of this story is questioned by the learned Valesius.

OF THE SECOND CENTURY.

A.D. 135, appeared *Saturninus* and *Basilides*, followers of Menander.

A.D. 140, *Carpocrates*, (beginning in Egypt) believing themselves the only saints; they held two principles of good and evil, &c., held faith sufficient without repentance and a good life; held two opposite wills in God; and that it was as expedient to appease the evil god by any villany whatsoever, as the good Deity by an honest and virtuous life; that Christ was only man sprung from Joseph and Mary by ordinary generation; that the soul only ascended.

Gnostics, who, indeed, appeared twenty years before; a sensual, impure sort of heretics, affecting the haughty title of persons more knowing than the rest of the world, which they said was created by certain powers called *Æons*. They said the faithful had two souls—a celestial, inciting to good; and a terrestrial, prompting to evil; and that they transmigrated into brutes. That there were two gods, or principles—one good, the other wicked; and would have two persons to be in our Saviour, distinct; of which one was *Christ*, the other *Jesus*. They declared against martyrdom and suffering for religion; which they held it lawful to change or deny in time of persecution, and on like occasions. In a word, the Church had never a more vile and profane sect risen in it. They held that men were also under an irresistible Fate, which encouraged them to all sorts of villany. And, therefore, made God

the author of sin; and that virtue and vice were so made by arbitrary laws, founded in the Divine Will, but being really, in themselves, imaginary things only, and not real.

(Anno 144.) *Valentinians* were a spawn of *Gnostics*, holding no fewer than thirty *æons*, ages or worlds, begotten by Abyss and Silence, or two Intelligences, from whom issued the Word of Life. That the body of Christ was only spiritual, making also God the author of sin; that the soul alone was redeemed, the body perishing; ascribing salvation to good works only; with the Epicureans, that the earth spontaneously produced mankind, of whom He made three sorts, *Cainites*, *Abelites*, and *Sethists;* the posterity of Cain being the damned; that Judas, being of Cain, (out of envy to the offspring of the two former) betrayed his Master; that angels had carnal commerce with women; with a world of such stuff and allegorical nonsense, as Irenæus[1] shows at large. And from hence the blasphemous

(Anno 142.) *Ophites*, who, adoring serpents, said that Christ was the tempter of Eve in that shape, and in the same entered the Virgin's womb; denying both the Incarnation and Resurrection.

(Anno 154.) *Cerdon*, from Carpocrates, maintained two principles, rejected all the Old Testament, denied Christ's humanity and His Resurrection, and that He suffered in spectre only. His scholar was

Marcion, who taught that the evil principle of God created the world; that our Blessed Saviour, descend-

[1] Irenæus, advers. Hæret., l. 1, c. 1, &c.

ing into hell, delivered the Sodomites, Cains, and other wicked persons. He condemned marriage and eating flesh; re-baptized after notorious crimes; baptizing another, (as proxy) for a *Catechumen* dying, before well instructed. He held war utterly unlawful upon every occasion; that men's souls did transmigrate.

(Anno 172.) *Apelles*, who attributed a starry substance to Christ's body, for that his human shape was fantastical only. Against these writ Theophilus of Antioch.

(Anno 170.) *Tatianus*, or the *Encraticæ*, disciples of Apelles, from their celibacy and abstinence from marriage, flesh, wine, and other incentives; and held that the first vine was produced between the Earth and the Devil and the poison of serpents; and, therefore, used wine in the Eucharist only; esteemed all men reprobate, besides their own party, even Adam himself; and denied that male and female were created by God. Their usual saying was, *Non est curandum quid quisque credat, sed tantùm curandum quid quisque faciat;* and that, so they lived well, they might be of any religion.

(Anno 170.) *Montanitæ* (with Prisca and Maximilla.) They used to baptize the dead, and to thrust their fore-finger into their nostrils when they prayed, to express their detestation of sin; great boasters of the spirit; nay, that their master was himself a divine spirit; they were all for revelations, denying Scripture. They had their strumpets following them, and other wenches, whom they called Prophetesses. They condemned second marriages; but allowed incest; mingled

infants' blood with flour in the Sacrament, and confounded the person of the Son, saying that the Father only suffered; and this monstrous heresy lasted to the fifth century nearly.

Quintiliani, about the same time, from one of that name, held that Christ assumed the form of a woman, not of man. They worshipped *Eve*, as being the cause of man's happiness, by eating the forbidden fruit; and, therefore, admitted the sex to the Priestly office: hence the *Artotyritæ*, who mingled cheese with the Sacramental bread, as being the milk of sheep, which was Abel's acceptable offering. Against all these writ Apollinaris, (a Cretan bishop) Serapion, and divers other holy persons, especially Irenæus, bishop of Lyons.

Blastus and *Florinus*, from those above, held that God created evil; from him (Anno 185) *Hermogenes*, a painter, maintained that matter was *ab æterno*.

The *Quartodecimani* observed Easter, on the *fourteenth* day of the moon in March (as the Jews), pretending tradition from St. John; for which Pope Victor excommunicated them. And this opinion prevailed two hundred years, to the great disturbance of the charities; it being a most unnecessary dispute, and condemned for such by the first General Council of Nice; which ordained it to be kept after the custom of the Western Church, as received by them from St. Peter. This sect also denied repentance to the lapsed.

Theodotus and *Artemon* denied the Divinity of Christ, with the *Gnostics;* that one might renounce the faith in time of persecution; held our Saviour but mere

man. The ringleader of this sect was a tanner, and was followed by

Bardesanes, who affirmed that God Almighty himself was obnoxious to Fate; holding a stoical necessity, and that virtue and vice depended on the influence of the planets. The

Valesians, misinterpreting the text,[1] held that none save eunuchs could enter heaven.

Patripassians and Praxeas affirmed (with the *Montanists*) that the Father only suffered, as being united with the Son; for they acknowledged but one person only in the Holy Trinity, as was also the error of Sabellius in the next century.

OF THE THIRD CENTURY.

(Anno 200.) *Adamites*, an early heresy, springing from the impious *Gnostics*. They went naked; their conversation with women was promiscuous in their assemblies, which they called *Paradise*, and held was only to be earthly. They rejected marriage and prayer, for that God already knew all our wants; and, therefore, it was superfluous. A race of these were the *Famulists*, of later date, who held that Christ is holiness, and Antichrist, sin; deny the Resurrection and baptism, till the age of thirty years; that heaven is to be only on this earth; that angels are born of women; every day a Sabbath; that the world was long before Adam; that, being certainly elected, they were not to pray for pardon of sin.

[1] Matt., xix., 12.

Novatus, an African (a discontented person), and Novatianus, at Rome, or the *Cathari*, were a sort of Puritans. He denied repentance to the lapsed, after baptism; and, therefore, re-baptized such as embraced his sect; condemning second marriages, and observing divers Mosaic rites, with many other opinions of the *Apostolici* and *Encratites*, concerning wives and goods. Yet some will not have them so much blamed, and think St. Cyprian too zealous against them, as holding all the fundamentals. They were only too rigid in the point of discipline. Indeed, there were great heats in the Church about this controversy.

Basilides and *Martialis*, in Spain, against whom writ Agrippa Castor, in twenty-four books, most learnedly; and, about the same time, the *Angelici*, *Eunuchiani*, *Beryllus*, &c.

Chiliasts, or *Millenians*, (from Papias, the century before), held that our Blessed Lord should reign on earth a *thousand* years after the Resurrection; but enjoying only spiritual delights. Irenæus, and many of the Fathers, besides Papias, were of this opinion, and it was almost universal, for two hundred and fifty years, till Dionysius Alexandrinus opposed it. Nor has the Church as yet condemned it for heresy; but those other enormities nourished under it by the truculent Anabaptists and Fifth-monarchy men.

The Scriptures, from whence they raked this opinion, were the literal interpretation of Isaiah, lxv., 17-25; also of St. Matthew, xix., 29; xxvi., 29, &c. Luke, xxi., 30, where our Lord speaks of His disciples having

restoration of a hundred-fold in this life, and of wife, children, relations, houses, lands, &c.; and of eating and drinking with Him. But it is not said "In my kingdom," but "in my father's kingdom;"[1] which plainly coufutes it. Lactantius describes their tenets amply in his seventh book, as being himself led away with the conceit, looking for a carnal coming of Christ, as the Jews did. Nor was St. Augustine himself altogether clear of this at first; but afterwards confesses his mistake; and, indeed, St. Jerome fully refutes it. Doubtless, the meaning of these expressions of Scripture are only to set forth the felicity of the other world by things sensible in this. However, that the Church shall enjoy a thousand years' tranquillity in power, purity, and external glory before the last Judgment, many of the reformed and very learned divines have thought, as Alsted, Du Moulin, Piscator, &c., from several expressions and hints in the Apocalypse.

(Anno 260.) *Sabellius* confounds the persons of the Holy Trinity.

Paulus Samosatenus. His sect lasted long in the East; affirming Christ to have been only man, and that God dwelt not in Him otherwise than by grace and efficacy; and, therefore, they baptized not in His name, and were rejected by the Nicene Council and the Synod at Antioch, who would re-baptize them. Then comes the Manichæan heresy (A. D. 276) from *Manes*, that arch-heretic, whom Bishop Archelaus would have killed, a Persian born—a heresy compounded of all

[1] Matt., xxvi., 29.

others. He held two principles, or superior powers; and that the Godhead had parts, or human organs, which hardly any the very heathen philosophers held. That God was substantively in every thing, even in the most sordid ordure. They condemned the use of flesh, of wine; that all fell out by chance; excluded the Old Testament, and said that the True God was not the author of the Law. They denied the Divinity of Christ and the Resurrection, and said His passion was fictitious. That the soul was the substance of God, and passed into a beast's; that John the Baptist was damned for doubting of Christ; that there was no Judgment; that himself was the true *paraclete*, or comforter; that mankind had two repugnant souls, and that the same was in all vegetables, and both were a part of God. They worshipped sun and moon; used execrable purifications; dreamed there were ships in the air, as Anaxagoras fancied, which transported souls, &c.;[1] condemned marriage; rejected baptism, almsgiving, good works; said that propensity and will to sin was natural, and not through the fall of Adam; that it was also a substance, not any quality traduced from parents, as did the Catharists, Macaroi, or the Blessed, (a sect so called) and it lasted in the Church three hundred years after this monstrous heretic was dead, that is, flayed alive for treason. His giving man's shape to God was likewise the error of the

Anthropomorphites, whose author was Audæus.

[1] He that would see more of this stuff may read the disputation of Archelaus, Bishop of Mesopotamia.

Origenists (from a disciple of the Egyptian Anthony), who renounced marriage; but allowed concubinage. But the *true Origenists* were so called from that incomparably learned Father, called also *Adamantian*, from his wonderful industry. These latter held, that the soul, after a certain revolution, should re-animate the body, and so from time to time; denied resurrection, or a future state; and held, that the very devils should, after a thousand years of torment, be released; that neither Christ nor the Holy Ghost see the Father; that the Son is not co-eternal with Him; affirmed pre-existence of souls, and that they were sent down to the earth, to expiate in men's bodies for some crimes committed in Heaven; turning the stories of Adam and Eve and all Scriptures into allegories;[1] and these opinions continued above three hundred years.

The *Hierarchitæ* denied marriage and the salvation of infants.

OF THE FOURTH CENTURY.

(Anno 306.) *Donatists.* Donatus was a Numidian, who separated from the orthodox, because Cæcilianus was made Bishop of Carthage by preference; pretending that such Cæcilianus, and the Bishops who ordained him, had burnt their Bibles (as *Traditores*), in time of persecution: which, upon examination, was found notoriously false. He refused to communicate with any, in whom he found the least spot of human infirmity;

[1] See these Stories contradicted by St. Augustine. De Civ. Dei, l. xi., c. 23.

for the Church (he said) was to be immaculate, and that *his* was the only pure one. He held that none were to be urged to reform their lives; and that the efficacy of Sacraments depended on the dignity of the Minister, and not on the Holy Ghost. They also re-baptized; denied magistracy, and that they might destroy any who were not of their sect. They pretended much to revelations and enthusiasm; affirmed the Son to be lower and less than the Father. And from these sprung the

Circumcellians, so called from their recesses, or cells, in which they lived very austerely, while yet they were thieves and murderers. From Donatus proceeded also the

Parmenianists, who said the world was created by an evil God, as did *Manes*, confounding the Persons of the Trinity; holding pre-existence of souls, and that they were of the substance of God himself; that the stars governed human events, and condemned marriage.

The *Luciferians*, also, about this time, from one Lucifer, Bishop of Sardinia, who taught that the devils created men's souls; that they were corporeal, and by traduction; denied repentance to the lapsed clergy.

Jovinian was a Roman; held a parity of sins; but that, after baptism, men could no more sin; rejected the perpetual virginity of Mary, as did, afterwards, the *Collyridians* and *Prisciltianists*, (an Arabian sect) who offered cakes to her.

(Anno 365.) The *Euchites* and *Messalians*, with the Enthusiasts, were in continual prayer, as the only re-

quisite, and therefore rejected all sacraments, faith, preaching, alms, &c.; and allowed dissembling in times of persecution; affirmed God to be visible, and had delivered to the Devil the government of mankind.

(Anno 324.) *Arius*, from an African of that name, was, in the Great Constantine's reign, a priest under Alexander, Patriarch of Alexandria; held that Christ, being man only, was created, *ex nihilo*, as any other creature; but that His soul was celestial; and that the Holy Ghost was likewise a creature, proceeding from the Son. Their doxology was, therefore, *Gloria* to the Father by the Son in the Holy Ghost; instead of what the orthodox used, namely, the same we yet receive. In baptizing, they dipped the upper part of the body only, to the navel, counting the inferior parts unworthy. They also re-baptized; and very long did this pernicious heresy continue in the Church, nor is it yet quite extinguished; but much of it is retained among the Socinians to this day. But the greater contest was between the orthodox and the *Semi-Arians*, (A. D. 330), whether the Son of God were consubstantial with the Father; differing only in a single letter, the orthodox affirming Him Ὁμοούσιος, of the same individual essence with the Father; the Arians, that He was Ὁμοιούσιος, of like substance only, not of the same, though of like will; and so, that He was *not* God essentially, but in will and virtue.

Eunomians affirmed God comprehensible by the creature; denied the like equality of essence, power, and will between the Father and the Son; that the

Holy Ghost was also but a creature; re-baptized the orthodox, retaining most of the Arian opinions.[1]

(Anno 375.) *Apollinaris* affirmed that Christ assumed man's body and sensitive soul, not his rational, which, he said, was divinely supplied; that the Trinity was three *distinct* powers in God; that the flesh of Christ was consubstantiate with the Divinity, and that He transferred it from Heaven, not through the Blessed Virgin; that God had but one will; that the Ceremonial Law should, after the Resurrection, come into use again.[2]

(Anno 355.) *Heloidians* denied the virginity of the Blessed Mother of Christ.

(Anno 340.) The *Aërians* held parity of degrees between Bishop and Presbyter; reproved set fastings, yet condemned eating flesh; admitted none to Communion but the unmarried, and such as had renounced the world.

(Anno 377.) *Hermogenes*, or *Seleucinus*, affirmed the principles of the world to be eternal with God; that the soul was created by angels; that Christ, in His Ascension, left his body in the sun; rejected baptism and the Resurrection.

Patricians, holding that the Devil made human flesh; that it was, therefore, lawful to murder one's self, to be quit of that flesh.

[1] See arguments against Arian opinions, in Theodoret's Hist. Eccles., l. i., c. 4.

[2] See both of the tenets and wondrous spreading of this pernicious heresy in Sozomen, p. 675.

Tertullianists, from that famous and learned priest, (long before flourishing under Severus, the emperor) who, being excommunicated by the Roman clergy for following the opinions of Montanus, fell into the error of God's corporiety, though without delineation of parts; not so the souls of men, which he affirmed had, and that they decreased and increased with the body, and were by traduction; that the souls of the wicked became devils; affirmed that the Blessed Virgin Mary re-married after the death of Christ; boasted much of the *Paraclete*, to be poured on them in greater measure than upon the Apostles themselves; said it was utterly unlawful for Christians to take arms, and reputed a second marriage adultery.

OF THE FIFTH CENTURY.

(Anno 400-410.) The *Pelagians*, sprung from the corrupted philosophy of the Stoics and Peripatetics, and their pure naturals, from one Morgan, a British Presbyter (not a Scot, as Vossius mistakes,) under Theodosius; held that, if God's assistance were requisite, there could be no free-will; but that man had free-will, and was able to keep the Commandments without the special grace of God; that victory over sin proceeded not from the Divine assistance, but our own power; and therefore vain it was to pray for any one's conversion; that the faithful had no sin, nor children any original taint, and might, therefore, be saved without baptism, though they went to Limbo, a certain third receptacle; that death was not the wages of sin;

but that Adam should have died, had he not fallen, and that his fault passed no farther than himself; that concupiscence was no sin; that men obtained grace through their good works, and rejected predestination. Of these the more modest were

Semi-Pelagians, who denied original sin; that the well employing and using our natural powers and free-will was the cause of predestination; that God foresaw who would believe and persevere before the foundation of the world; but that to this grace was necessary the assistance of God; that infants were saved according to the good or evil life they would have embraced, had they lived to be adults; that therefore the number of the elect and reprobate was infinite; that one might reject grace and fall away.

Against the first Pelagians, writ St. Augustine and the African Bishops; and this heresy was condemned by several councils.

Against the Semi-Pelagians, the same Augustine, Prosper, Hilary, and, of later times, Calvin, Bishop Davenant, Dr. Twiss, &c. The Arminians and Remonstrants came, in many things, near these opinions, as we shall show in this Recension.

Predestinarians (yet St. Augustine's followers) affirmed, that those who were predestinate might sin securely, and could not be damned.

Nestorians, (so called from a Patriarch of Constantinople,) held Christ to be two distinct persons—one the Son of God, the other of Mary: [1] and that the first

[1] Mary, not *Deiparam,* but *Christiparam.*

descended not upon Him till he was baptized. He also made the Humanity equal to the Divinity, so confounding the Divine operations. These opinions were all condemned in the Council of Ephesus, by Cyril; and the heretic's tongue was eaten out by worms, and afterwards his body, with divers of his followers and disciples, swallowed up by an earthquake, like Corah and his company.[1]

Eutychians, confounding the nature of Christ, held that Christ had also two different natures before the union; but, afterwards, one only; the Divine, which only died, and the Human, swallowed up the other. This was condemned by a Provisional Synod at Constantinople, but revived again by Diascorus, Bishop of Alexandria, and condemned again by the Council of Chalcedon. In the fifth century were the

(Anno 500.) *Acephali*, who admitted of neither Bishop, Priest, nor Sacrament; confounded the nature of Christ, and affirmed that his body was corruptible. Severus, Bishop of Alexandria, was father of this heresy. They were also named Theodosians.

OF THE SIXTH CENTURY.

(Anno 598.) *Mahomet*, that signal impostor and libidinous robber, appeared. He held both Christ and Moses to be great Prophets; but reckoned himself a greater. He was for the worship of one God only; but retained Circumcision; prohibited eating swine's flesh, and drinking wine; maintained plurality of wives and concubines; dreamed of a sensual paradise; that,

[1] See Evagrius, l. i., c. 2, et seq.

all being predestinate to a fatality, they were not to avoid the pestilence, which, sweeping multitudes yearly away, providentially abates of the over-swarming numbers of a sect, who place the confidence of their religion being true in the progress of their armies and victories over the Christians. They also abstain from blood; expect their impostor's resurrection, after a thousand years; which being now effluxed, they pretend they did not hear what he said, and so attend a thousand more. This whole rhapsody of stuff is composed out of both Jewish, Pagan, and Christian, by the assistance of one Sergius, a Jew, a Nestorian monk. They also prohibited all human learning, and the means to obtain it, printing, lest the wiser world should discover its weakness; and forbade reading all books, save their Alcoran, or mingle of monstrous lies and contradictions, not worthy a rational man; and, therefore, they need no further confutation. So that this sect is founded on foul sensuality, fatality, tyranny, blood, and rebellion: their ringleaders, with several desperate Saracens, defecting from the Emperor Heraclius, their lawful sovereign.

OF THE SEVENTH CENTURY.

Monothelites, like Eutychians, affirming that there was but one will and nature in Christ; and these two heresies so infected the Church in the East, that some believed it provoked Almighty God to raise up and afflict them with the Arabian Impostor. There were several Councils during this century; as that of Lateran, Toledo, &c.—not orthodox.

Maronites, from one Maron, held with Eutychus that Christ had but one nature and will, and, since this, many of them have submitted to Popish doctrines, and by subtlety of that Church, are much corrupted.

OF THE EIGHTH CENTURY.

Albaneres, who taught oaths to be unlawful; and, though oppugning many errors of the Roman corrupted Church, yet held divers erroneous opinions of their own.

OF THE NINTH CENTURY.

Armenians. They, indeed, minister the Sacrament in both kinds, but with unleavened bread; yet hold not transubstantiation, or that sacraments confer grace. They communicate to infants; pray for the dead, but deny purgatory; and eat flesh on Fridays, but strictly observe Lent, and re-baptize converts from the Latin Church, and hold that all men's souls were created together.

The *Jacobites*, from Syria, are a sect of the former, holding sundry errors of the Eutychians, Nestorians, and Diascorus; but of late, as among the Maronites, the Jesuits much prevailed among them.

The *Coptics*, anciently in Egypt, are a sort of Jacobites, affirming but one nature in Christ; administer the Sacrament in both species, and also communicate to infants, deny purgatory, and reject extreme unction; observe the Lord's Day in cities only, and baptize in the church alone.

Abyssinian Christians, (believed to have been con-

verted by the Eunuch,) circumcise both sexes, not as a religious rite, but of ancient custom only, or (as some affirm) by reason of an unnatural excrescence. Among other superstitions, they also baptize yearly in lakes and rivers, upon the *Epiphany;* when, also, in imitation of our Saviour, they re-baptize; but not as a part of religion. They also abstain from unclean beasts; observe both Saturday and Sunday; administer the Communion in both kinds, in a spoon, and receive it standing, as do the Russians. They believe that infants, though dying unbaptized, are saved by the faith of their parents; acknowledge but one nature and will in Christ; believe the soul's traduction. Their clergy do not marry, but live by their labours, without tithes; eat flesh on Fridays, between Easter and Pentecost, and embrace the first three General Councils only; use pictures, but no sculpture in the churches.

Muscovite and *Russian*, under the Constantinopolitan patriarchs, differ little from the Greek Church, save in their wondrous superstitions, and that they exact marriage in their priests, and in the sacrament mingle the wine and bread together, as do the Greeks, which they deliver in a spoon.

Eastern India Christians, (long since converted by St. Thomas,) hold as yet divers things with the Reformed. For the rest, they use a hot iron when baptized, because of those words which it is said, "they should be baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire." The Romanists have also among these brought in much of their superstition.

Greek and *Oriental*, so long orthodox, but now universally corrupted through that barbarism brought in amongst them by their dissensions, which exposed them to the Turks and Saracens, now for so many ages invading that so glorious Church and Empire, so that it is now overspread with ignorance, and relics of the many heresies we have enumerated, and of which divers of the errors in the Western Church are offsprings—through the craft of the Roman emissaries, who, by their bribes and other arts amongst the illiterate and miserable Clergy, have brought them lately to receive much of their trash. They do not yet all of them admit of the Papal Supremacy, nor mutilate the Blessed Sacrament, which they give in both kinds, and adore. Their priests also marry once. They use neither extreme unction nor confirmation. They admit flat, but no sculptured images, nor fall they down to either; neither believe they purgatory, though they favour an opinion of a third place. From blood and things suffocated they generally abstain. But that which formerly made the mighty stir against them, was their denying the procession of the Holy Ghost to be from the Father and the Son, yet baptizing in his name; whilst divers learned men believe that, for that article, *à filio* and *per filium*, in the sense of that Church, the difference consists only *de modo loquendi*.

Among the Fathers, they esteem chiefly St. Basil, St. Chrysostome, and Damascenus, whose writings they equal even with the Holy Scriptures. They observe four Lents, and pray for the dead, being under four

Patriarchs. They retain also monks of the Order of Saint Basil. And that part of their Church which were fetched over to the Roman party, was at the Council of Florence. Upon promises and hopes, and money dispersed among the indigent Bishops, by the Pope, they many of them submitted for the present; but, being afterwards deceived, though many proselyted, yet remains there a part, who would never be recovered to that Church. And of this it is thought there are more, going under the name of schismatics, among the Romanists, than there are of the Popish Church in all Europe besides.[1]

The *Godescalians*, (from one of that name,) were Predestinarians, affirming that Christ died for the elect only, and would not that all should be saved.

OF THE TENTH, ELEVENTH, TWELFTH, AND THIRTEENTH CENTURIES.

The *Waldenses* and *Albigenses* rejected many Popish doctrines, though retaining a mixture of other errors; as that laymen might exercise the ministerial function; that wicked magistrates lost their right to govern, and are said not to use the Apostles' Creed; in which and several other imputations they have doubtless been exceedingly wronged by their most implacable persecutors of the Romish Church; and are known to be a very ancient, simple, innocent, and devout sort of poor Chris-

[1] The history of that Florentine Council and transaction of this matter is published by Dr. Creighton, late Bishop of Bath and Wells.

tians, most barbarously murdered and disturbed; sending forth a continued succession of holy, though plain, poor men,—orthodox as to essentials, for aught that appears to the contrary, even from the very Apostles' time.

The Councils of *Lateran*, defining transubstantiation, and that Popes may depose Kings, and give away their states, &c., are justly to be ranked amongst the most wicked heresies.

The *Flagellanti* taught, that the expiation of sins was to be by corporal afflictions, and that none but such as with scourges disciplined themselves could be saved.

The *Fratricelli*, from one Hermanus, an Italian, held community of wives, and were a sect of obscene libertines, and put to death those children so begotten; were also against magistrates: and such were the

Framelists, all of them spawn of the Anabaptists, only changing names. A signal ringleader of this sect was the famous

John of Leyden and *Kniperdilling*, following out *Nicholas Storke;* as before were those

Libertines, David George, Quintin, and *Coppin*, who pretended themselves Messiahs; denying Christ to be the son of Mary, or true God; rejected magistrates, yet set up themselves as kings; holding community of wives and goods; went naked, and so met in their very conventicles, and were authors of infinite abominations, murders, rebellions, and mischiefs.

OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

The *Lollards* about this time appearing, affirmed that wealth and riches were not consistent with evangelical perfection; that the truly spiritual were not under the jurisdiction of magistrates. And these are said to have sprung from one Gualterus (so surnamed) and reported to hold, that Lucifer was unjustly banished heaven, and should yet be restored; denied the perpetual virginity of Mary, &c. But it is believed, that these latter sects were exceedingly misrepresented by their persecuting enemies, who could not endure any who began to see into and reject the tyranny of the popes. Upon which account they most spitefully persecuted the

Wicklivians, who forsook many of their doctrines; but erred in holding schools and universities unlawful, with all degree of honour and encouragement of learning; (as is suspected) they were not in that also defamed by the common enemy. And the same tenets were publicly taught and improved by

John Huss and *Jerome of Prague*, totally opposing the Papists, in which it did not appear they rejected learning, being so well able to answer all their adversaries. Hence sprung the

OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

Antinomians, totally rejecting the Law, as of no use under the Gospel; and that no works, good or evil concerned men's salvation; but that good and evil were

indifferent in themselves, as only depending on God's despotic will; that nothing was essentially sinful or morally righteous; (though they might as well affirm it of Almighty God himself, which were most blasphemous.) That no man is punished for sin, and that even the greatest crimes are no sins in the godly; that Christ only operates good, and not the Christian; and that themselves were already justified, and all was so *ab æterno*. These opinions revived much in this later age, as did the *Anti-Sabbatarians*, who observed no solemn set day for the service of God.

Zuinglium Sacramentarium will have the holy communion to be a receiving only the signs and figures of Christ's body and blood, rejecting the notion of *really and truly*.

SECTION III.

HERESIES AND SECTS, FROM THE REFORMATION TO THE PRESENT TIME.

1. OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

The Council of Trent, which, imposing no fewer than eleven new Articles; some of them notoriously false, others of matter disputable, under pain of damnation to those who could not swallow them; cut off all terms of that Reformation, which all Christendom loudly called for; and, adding those Articles to the *Athanasian Symbol*, transferred the concluding anathema thereof to the foot of their monstrous doctrine: all this by a cabal of the Popes, and contrary to the endeavours and pro-

testations of the most learned doctors, princes, and others, who had their representatives in that assembly, as is made out plainly by the modest writers and most impartial historians of their own communion. So that this Council's decrees may be justly reckoned among the most dangerous heresies that ever appeared in the Christian Church.[1]

Faustus Socinus (or modern Arian, as well as Pelagian) was a witty Italian, who affirmed men to have been naturally mortal before the Fall, having no original righteousness; that the light of nature imparted no knowledge of God; that man, having no original sin, could fulfil the Law; that God has no prescience of contingencies determinatively, or of man's free actions; that the causes of predestination are in ourselves, and may be frustrated; that God, without any satisfaction, might with justice have pardoned sin; that Christ did not satisfy for them, but only as an extraordinarily just and virtuous person, not as God, but by his patience, submission, piety, and excellent example obtained faculty for us to satisfy for ourselves, by faith and obedience; that Christ died for Himself, and for the mortality and infirmity of our nature; that eternal death is only a continuance in death, or rather annihilation: which is all that is meant by hell; that Satan was created evil; and so he renders God the author of all sin; that nothing is to be believed, save what is evident both to sense and reason; and, there-

[1] Of this more fully when we come to speak of the Popish errors in this chapter.

fore, they reject the Trinity, holding that the Holy Ghost is not really God, but a certain virtue and quality; and were, therefore, of old called *anti-Trinitarians*, denying the eternal generation of our Blessed Saviour. In a word, that Christ is not God, question His incarnation, yet worship Him, and become idolators.

They also deny the resurrection of the same body; and turn the whole mystery of Christ into metaphor and figure, as when He is called a Priest, a Justifier, &c.; they say He was the image only of a Priest, and not a Saviour by His own power, nor in a true sense offered for us, but in shadow; and, therefore, did not bear our guilt, rejecting the doctrine of satisfaction further than that He was an extraordinary person, whose piety, singular virtues, and passion were meritorious and of Divine power, and for which, and His sufferings in maintaining His religion, He is thus exalted.

All which seems to be but a refining upon the Pagan, who consecrated their heroes, &c.; and so evacuate the infinitely Divine love, which consisted in abasing the Deity for man's redemption. A sucker of this rotten stock has lately appeared in a treatise called *Theologia Polito-Philosophica*, ascribed to Spinosa, whose drift is to undermine the truth and value of Holy Scriptures, and to turn religion into morality only; and that for the rest, they are speculations which may be believed or neglected, as men please, without any use of faith or any supernatural grace; that the magistrate is the infallible judge, &c. A composition of many very dangerous opinions, craftily and insinuatively introduced

by the subtlety of Satan, Hobbs, Anabaptists, Quakers, Theists, and Atheists, and setting up natural reason above revelation, and creating difficulties and doubts where there are none, accommodated to Heathen as well as to Christians. In the mean time, none have more successfully proved the verity of the Christian religion than the Socinians, especially Placæus, and are in some of their writings excellent Textuaries. Against the Socinians, especially in what concerns the satisfaction of Christ, Grotius has most incomparably written, Junius, our Bishop Pearson,[1] Dr. Tillotson, and many others.

In this century rose the famous

Martin Luther, author of that famous Reformation in Germany, raised just a hundred years from the perfidious burning of John Huss and his companion Jerome, according as was predicted. Martin was an Augustine friar, who took occasion, from the intolerable encroachments and doctrine of the Roman Church, preaching up Indulgences, to examine and dispute against their many corruptions, with wonderful success; reforming many of that country, and spreading what he taught far and wide—wonderfully protected by Almighty God against the most powerful adversaries. Among some more tolerable errors, he rejected the Epistle to the Hebrews, St. James, and the Second of Peter, the two last of St. John, and the Apocalypse, as not canonical; and in point of the sacrament, holding a real gross receiving of the flesh and blood of Christ in and with the sacra-

[1] On the Creed, p. 313.

mental elements, by way of *Consubstantiation.* But the more moderate party followed the meek and learned *Melancthon,* who favoured Calvin in most things, saving the rigid decrees.

John Calvin, albeit an admirable divine, and one of the most thorough reformers, a person of a clear, piercing understanding, pure Latin fluent expression, and, for the most part, of sound orthodox principles, held yet some opinions not so generally embraced among the best reformed. Especially to be rejected is, what to some appears, as if he should have denied the Son to be God of God, but of Himself; and that our Blessed Lord, despairing on the cross, was in the state of the damned, though not continuing in it. And that neither Church nor Magistrate oblige the conscience, &c. Some things no less offensive to princes and governors he seems to favour, in the last chapter of his (otherwise) incomparable Institution; that saving faith is inadmissible; teaches certainty of salvation; denies free-will in spiritual things. As to the Blessed Sacrament, they receive it standing, and affirm the mystery to be the believing in Christ, and eating by faith, in remembrance of the death of Christ, without any notion of other union with him.

This, however, many of his followers explain more to the sense of the Church of England. But the great and main controversy in that peremptory assertion, that God of His mere pleasure decreed to deny to some the grace of saving faith and repentance, without any motive or cause found in one man more than in another;

but resolving to inflict damnation irreversibly, or, as they term it, *absolute reprobation*, without any respect to original or actual sin. This, indeed, is by some interpreted; others affirm the contrary, and that he only held that God's purpose was indeed to deny grace to some, by way of *preterition*, or, rather, *non-election*, and electing others freely without foresight. And truly the modern Calvinists utterly deny God's decreeing the damnation of any single person, except for sin. But that some there were whose impenitence he resolved not to cure; but none whom He has not under obligation to repentance; distinguishing between God's will of purpose, determining events; and His legislative will, determining His creature's duty; and that yet there is no contrariety between these wills.

They affirm, that God's eternal purpose to save, of lapsed man, all who believe and persevere, is not His whole decree of predestination; nor His resolution to condemn all who persist in infidelity, the sum and whole of His reprobation. But, besides this general purpose, they acknowledge a decree to give to a select number of persons grace and glory, and to leave others in that sin and misery derived on them by the Fall. They say not that God's decree offers violence to our will, or any natural faculty of it, or liberty essential to it, unless it be to corrupt lusts and evil inclinations, but that electing love renders men willing, and that holiness is an effect of election, and sin no effect of reprobation, but its consequence. Nor affirm they that sin is a cause of preterition or non-election

comparatively considered; but God's good pleasure to save (for example) Peter, and condemn Judas, being both by nature alike corrupted; so that God dooms none, but for sin.

But to temper these severe doctrines of decrees, (anno 1566) *Molinus*, a Jesuit, excogitated a *Scientia media*, by which Almighty God, before any act of His own will, did know which way the will of the creature would incline, upon supposition that He afford such assistance, and by which He would have known the contrary, had the will made use of its liberty to turn to the other way. This is, in truth, to make in God a middle or mixed knowledge, as if He understood not what He decreed.

Remonstrants, who, in opposition to the Calvinist, held that election to life was the will of Almighty God, to save such as faithfully persevered.

That election was sometimes absolute, sometimes conditional. That faith is a condition, and that in its action the light of reason is necessary.

That faith and obedience are foreseen of God, and election accordingly.

That some elect may totally and finally fall away, and therefore no certainty of election immutable. That God decrees none to damnation, merely of His own will, but upon prescience.

The sum is, that God ordained to save all those in, for, and through Christ, who, being fallen and under the dominion of sin, do by the aid of the Holy Ghost firmly persevere in faith and obedience.

Secondly. That our Blessed Saviour died not for any particular person only, but effectually for all, by imputation, who lay hold upon Him; nay, though there had been no actual application of it to any individual.

They farther affirm, that this universal grace is exhibited to all, by which (having liberty of will) one may perform the duty and obtain salvation; and that God saves some by decree determined to singular persons sometimes, as from eternity foreseeing their faith and perseverance.

That Christ by His precious blood established no new Covenant, but procured a right and title from His Father to make what Covenant He pleased; or that Christ died for all, that by His death He might atone for all, and make remission of sin conditionally; i.e. that none but true believers should have benefit of it.

That man, having freedom of will, is not justified by faith alone; but that God accepts and esteems our imperfect graces of faith and obedience as meritorious, as if we were impeccable.

Thirdly. That original sin of itself condemns none, and that natural men, by the right use of the gifts of nature, obtain saving grace; God having afforded means sufficient to bring them to Christ.

Fourthly. That, by the Fall, the will of itself was never corrupted, but only weakened, obscured, and perplexed, through the irregularity of the action.

That no new gifts are infused upon our conversion, and consequently faith is no infused grace, but the act of man.

Fifthly. That moral grace renders the natural man spiritual.

That men may frustrate their own conversions, and that grace and free will co-operate in conversion; and for the manner of this co-operation, it is not to be thought irresistible, the Scripture affirming some did resist the Holy Ghost.[1]

That perseverance is a condition of the Covenant, not an effect of election.

That God affords means to the faithful, sufficient for perseverance, but that it is in the choice of our own will.

That even some regenerate persons may fall from grace and salvation, and therefore there is no assurance of perseverance in this life, without a special revelation; wherefore, the contrary doctrine is hurtful, being an occasion of presumption.

That temporary faith, and that which is called justifying, differ only in permanency; so that, on the whole matter, such as are engrafted in Christ, by a lively working faith, may be conquerors, Christ being ready to assist them, provided that, for their parts, they prepare for encounter, and implore his help, and be not wanting to themselves in performing their duty; but that through their own negligence they fall from those principles of saving grace, by which they are supported through Christ.

Thus, as to election, Arminius held four decrees. The *first* is the decree of sending Christ to redeem mankind.

[1] Acts, vii., 51.

Secondly. To give life to believers.

Thirdly. To afford grace and strength sufficient to the faithful; and *lastly,* the decree of giving salvation to those particular persons, who God foresees will believe and persevere in the faith.

Now, against these opinions, which greatly disquieted the *Calvinists,* and some others of the orthodox, was a Synod called at Dort (A.D. 1618) in Holland, by a meeting of the Protestant divines of the Reformation, to examine and determine the tenets of Arminius.

The *Supra-lapsarians* (for so were their opinions distinguished) consisted in these three articles: *First.* That God decreed the creation of mankind to different ends, which were to have for object,

Firstly. The decree of committing sin, whereof the object must be man created, but not corrupted.

Secondly. The decree of electing and reprobating, which for object must have man both created and corrupted. Thus making God the willer of sin, and (contrary to His own words expressly in Scripture) He would not have all men to be saved, but propounded His Word to reprobates, merely to damn them without excuse.

The *Sublapsarians'* opinion was, that God had decreed irresistible conversion and salvation of some particular persons, and the permission of some men's impenitence and perdition; and affirm that Adam was made a common person, and a federal as well as natural head, and so he sinning drew in all his posterity with him.[1]

[1] The history of all these doctrines defended and reproved, see Dr. Heylin, (*pro*) in his *Historia Quinquarticularis,* &c., by Dr.

Gomarus was another rigid Belgian, holding God's eternal and irreversible decrees, and that thereupon some, who were moved to a holy life, persevered, and never fell away; whilst others, abandoned to wickedness and the common vices of mankind, lay totally involved in sin; while Arminius, less severe, represented God a loving and tender Father, and as to persons, as ready to pardon repentants through Christ, as to punish obstinate sinners. Thus, whilst Gomarus plainly made God author of sin and the hardener of obstinate sinners, such as have diligently consulted both the Scriptures and the ancients, find the primitive Fathers were for freedom of will. From hence proceeded the equity of rewards and punishments, yet so as totally flowing from the Divine beneficence and gracious promises, whose free gift it was, and whose assistance was absolutely necessary. In the mean time, St. Augustine (first of all) in dispute with Pelagius, relinquished, indeed, the name of liberty, as inclining to the severer decree; whilst all over Greece and Asia the ancient and more gentle opinion was retained.

In the Western world and over Europe, this great name of St. Augustine drew many sectators, and especially when (after the wrangling schools hardly ever read, or were acquainted with any other doctor) it was disputed between the Franciscans and Dominicans, what was that Father's sense; until Luther, out of a monastery of St. Augustine, fiercely maintained that man had

Hickman, (*con.*) *Hist. Quinquarticularis exarticulata*, &c., 8vo. (1673) in which are divers particulars worthy of note.

no free will, which seemed so unreasonable to the learned Erasmus, that he mainly set himself to oppose it, and by his arguments the mild and modern Melancthon (until now Luther's great friend) recanted, which at last brought Luther himself also to alter his opinion. But then comes Calvin, and more vigorously than ever asserts it than either, adding (what was never before heard of) that a true saving faith was perpetual, and could not be lost. Which confidence of salvation was proof against the ill effect of whatever wasting or grievous sin a man might fall into. And this opinion was also confirmed by his colleague, Beza, at Geneva, Zanchy, Ursinus, Piscator, and others in Germany, and arrived to that excess, as to maintain a necessity of sinning depended on the first cause.

This gave the Lutherans fresh occasion to quarrel, especially about the Eucharist, which in the beginning only sharpened men's wits; but, when certain young scholars at Geneva, in the Palatinate and other places, began to be called assemblies, and would be ordering church matters, and broaching these novelties as infallible doctrines, not admitting any contradiction, (for to such they denied the sacraments and holy ordinances) it became insolent and altogether insufferable, disturbing the civil government, and that so dangerously, that the States of Holland were forced to repress both parties, upon solemn hearing. And thus far had ungoverned zeal, or pride of victory, or melancholy, proceeded upon some persons, while Christians should admit no man's fancies or pretences, but what is plainly

evident in Holy Scripture and sound reason, with modesty and discretion.

We have been longer on these particulars, because so greatly disturbing the peace of the reformed Church in this latter age. Upon which account we pass to the no less perturbators of the quiet and beauty of that Christian charity, so earnestly recommended by our Blessed Saviour, the

Presbyterians, of late more turbulent in England, more peevish and singularly rigid than any of the Calvinists, especially the more sober and learned French, amongst whom have appeared many of excellent judgment and piety. These Presbyterians, formerly denominated *Puritans* and *Precisians*, sprang up in the reign of the famous Queen Elizabeth, Knox the Scot, and some other divines of the reformed, flying into Germany during the persecution under Queen Mary. These, after her death returning into England, molested the decent settlement of the Church, affirming that it was to be wholly under the jurisdiction of Presbytery and eldership, bishops being, as they affirmed, no distinct order, and that so it continued for the first three hundred years after Christ.[1]

That the power of ordination is with the Presbytery in common with the bishop, and that their order, not that of bishops only, is *jure divino;* that discipline and power of the keys is as much theirs to dispense; that

[1] They pretend in their favour: St. Jeromé, Epist. ad Evagrium; Irenæus, l. 4; Cont. Hæres., c. 43, 44; Eusebius, l. 5, c. 23; Titus, i., 6, 7.

for helps in government, there must be deacons and deaconesses, to take care of the poor widows and orphans, and attend on works of charity, so that the preachers may wholly vacate to the Word; but that those helpers might not preach the Gospel, and such they affirmed were Philip and his daughters.

That Presbyters received their succession from the Apostles as to preaching and administration of the Sacraments and discipline; but were in this inferior, as not immediately called by Christ, nor infallible, nor sent into the world, as the Apostles were, but consigned to particular places.

They acknowledge bishops were so called of ancient time, as *præpositi* and superintendants, till heresy spreading, they (the Presbyters) obtained the same authority, the bishops retaining only majority or pre-eminence of order, (not of authority) for the better composing of Church matters, as the faithful multiplied, and proselytes came in. But that this was temporary only, and by consent for order's sake; and in that capacity allow St. Peter might be as it were *Chairman* or Prolocutor, to moderate amongst the college of Apostles. And that in this sense they are still content to allow of bishops, but not as of Divine right, or to lord it over the rest as diocesan, or as having sole faculty of ordaining without the Presbytery.

They form their government (as pretended) from the Apostles, appointing Presbyters and Deacons in all their Churches; whereas, indeed, *Presbyter* signified old, grave, and experienced persons only, who were bishops,

circumspect, vigilant; the *Deacons*, servants and ministers, (as the very name imports) and St. Paul uses the name promiscuously, which indeed they take great hold of. They also affirm, that their ruling Elders are to take off (as we said) the burden from the preacher, as men of more skill and experience in secular affairs. Also, that the power and right of electing ministers was originally in the people, as well as the clergy, though not ordination,[1] and that they had power of the keys. And that, when Christ said, "Tell it to the Church,"[2] his meaning was to all the Apostles together, as the Universal Church Representatives.

They say one may teach, and not preach, that is, advise, exhort, and so are *Doctors* not *Pastors*. Their ruling Elders are distinct from Presbyters, or preaching Elders, and have seats in consistory, for the better ordering the Church in its civil and decent government.

That Timothy and Titus were Evangelists, not settled bishops or Presbyters, but extraordinary messengers of St. Paul, and upon that score preached, but were no farther infallible than as they observed his doctrine and direction; Evangelists being such as were sent and delegated by Christ and His Apostles, as messengers having faculty to preach and constitute Churches from place to place itinerally, but still by virtue of canon and rule from the Apostles, who had power only to confirm converts. They therefore held, that a bishop cannot legally excommunicate without the Presbytery, and affirm that even kings, as well as

[1] From I. Tim., iv., 14. [2] S. Matt., xviii., 17.

inferior magistrates, may be obnoxious to and under that censure, urging that of Uzziah and Theodosius. That public scandalists should be suspended the Eucharist, &c.

They are most of them Predestinarians; hold faith to consist in a confident belief and a certain familiar recumbency on Christ. That the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is only commemorative; the elements, signs and figures, and call it eating by faith; in most other opinions sound and orthodox.

Of the preciser sort of these, were (as we said) those formerly called *Puritans*, and from their patron .

Brownists, who generally rejected the Lord's Prayer, as stilts for those of lame intellectuals and babes in grace, as also all set forms, which yet the Calvinists both allowed and practised abroad; held consecration of churches, decent vestments, holy-days, and other ceremonies profane and anti-Christian; and some of them, ordination of ministers, refusing to communicate with those whom they accounted wicked; and that the Holy Sacrament, administered by a scandalous Presbyter, was ineffectual, &c.

Erastus, (no unlearned Protestant physician) misliking Calvin's model, was against all Ecclesiastical Polity.

I omit the learned *Episcopius* and *Coarcelœus*, Divines and Professors in Holland, who are suspected to have favoured some opinions inclining to Socinianism. They held it unlawful to eat blood, and thought the Holy Eucharist may be administered by a lay person; nor did Grotius dislike it.

And now, out of all these is risen another sect, taking advantage of the dissensions and Church disturbances during the late rebellion in England, who, as departing from all the churches and parties hitherto named, call themselves

Independents, who consist of certain peculiar assemblies or gathered congregations; and these, being of a select number, meeting privately, renounce all ceremony, rites, and polity, or indeed learning, as wholly unnecessary in the ministry, so that any private man may exercise the spiritual function, with power of Church censure, and other offices. And in some of their meetings their women determine ecclesiastical causes, and excommunicate, private persons administering the Holy Sacrament. The magistrate marries, and may pronounce divorces, which they do on slight occasions.

Whilst thus they would avoid all superstition, they are much affected to giving only Scripture names to all their children, especially Old Testament ones. In preaching, seldom use they text or connexion, but miserably ramble both in prayer and sermons, which they extend to an exceeding length, uttered with strange familiar expressions. Nor is this exercise confined to any one; but they bid the Psalms, pray, preach, yelp, according as any of the assembly finds himself stirred by the Spirit; and when any one prophesies, another examines his doctrine. They confer baptism only on the children of their own assembly, and communicate with no reformed church. Nor use they any prayer

preparative at the Eucharist, but receive the elements, sitting at the Table, and are covered, or rather indeed have no Table, as it happens, to avoid (as pretended) superstition. Nor compel they any in matters of religion and worship; nor call they any thing by the vulgar name in common conversation, using the first, second, third, &c., day, instead of Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, &c., and the like of the months. This sect they held to be the beginning of the kingdom of Christ, which is to last on earth a thousand years; affecting singularity, their word in ordinary discourse is *yea, nay.*

Anabaptists (and modern *Donatists*) are of divers and very dangerous opinions, and that through the great Providence of God; since, should they once unite, their principles and zeal would give danger to the States they live in, as we have instanced in the history of John of Leyden, David George, and other impure sects among them. Some allow not our Blessed Saviour taking flesh of the Virgin Mary, but passing through her, as water through a pipe; nor will they have him to be God. Some re-baptize, but christen none of their own children, till adult; hold the enjoyment of an earthly monarchy, after the Day of Judgment; are assertors of free will, boasting the being an unsinning Church. They perform all divine offices by laymen, reject magistrates; that dominion is founded in grace, and belongs to the saints only, who are to have all in common. They refuse to take any oath before the magistrate for the clearing any controversy. They

separate from all others as impure, and yet deny original sin, pretend to frequent revelations; and some are Adamites, Muggletonians, and Libertines, denying the Resurrection.

Out of these, and others like them, are spawned another enthusiastic sect, the

Quakers, so called from (at the first) a certain affected fit of shivering, which invades the enthusiast, when he holds forth, that is, in their language, preaches. Their doctrine seems to be a mixture of all heresies. They deny the Divinity of Christ; baptize, not as of necessity, nor make any account of it, affirming it to be only spiritual. Nor do they marry, receive or use the Sacrament, but as a thing indifferent. They deny also the Resurrection, and with the Sadducees say it is past. For the rest, they turn the Scriptures into allegory, and interpret accordingly the Fall of Adam, and other places, which they reject as impertinent, except suggested by the lights and impulses within, which they say is the Rule of Faith; not willing to answer that text which tells them, that the spirits of the Prophets are subject to the Prophets, because it teaches submission to pastors and magistrates, and to the judgments of others. Yet hold they it utterly unlawful to use arms, or repulse the greatest injury; will not take any oath, or so much as use the common terms of civility either with superiors or inferiors. *Thou* and *thee* is their language to their greatest king, without baring the head, or using the least respect. They meet in the streets, and fields, and barns, as the spirit seizes

them. A frugal, plain, silent, yet crafty sect, allowing their women to preach, pretending the most primitive simplicity.

But, though the *Quakers* will not draw sword, so much as in their own defence, yet another sect there is, of *Anabaptists*, who, dreaming of a personal descent of Christ, to set up a more than Jewish temporal kingdom, are for a

Fifth Monarchy. Indeed, a most desperate and truculent sect, affirming that the dominion of the earth, belonging to King Jesus only, upon presumption of extraordinary help and miraculous assistance, when ten shall put to flight ten thousand, have sometimes (and not long since with us) risen desperately, killing and murdering all they met with, nor terrified either by arms or numbers, rush upon inevitable danger, believing an immediate presence of Christ, to take the possession out of the hands of the worldly power, and distribute it among them, who are to reign with Him a thousand years. It is incredible how few of these enthusiasts have encountered thousands of armed and disciplined men without fear, though they always miscarried in their delusive enterprises, as consisting of mechanics, very ignorant and poor, abused people. Thus is another sect known by the name of

Seekers, who (as St. Paul characterizes them) are always learning and doubting, without ever coming to the knowledge of the truth, but are continually passing from one church and sect to another.

THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

About the beginning of this century appeared, in Germany, the

Rosi-crucians, a certain chymical sect, among whom was lately the famous Jacob Böhmen, their religion consisting mostly in contemplation of nature, raptures, and spiritualizing the progress of their great work; great enthusiasts, but of a silent, innocent deportment, for the most part; rather a sort of philosophic monks, conversing little with the world, save those of their own *adepti*.

Antoinette de Bourignon: she was of Brabant, born to riches, and, going out of her country, (as not so safe for one who, though of the Romish Communion, held divers opinions not current amongst them) retired into Friezeland. What she held may be collected from her books, which indeed are full of surprising things. She seemed to communicate with any Christians,—was very charitable. For the rest, a visionary; and one who, not finding there was any religion to her fancy, would needs set up a new sect, and has taken great pains in no fewer than eighteen or twenty volumes, to preach to all the world. The moral part is delivered in no ordinary style; the rest are dreams, paradoxes, and mysteries, which have begun to take with some less wary persons. They seem to affect neither Papists, Lutherans, Calvinists, Socinians, nor Anabaptists, nor reject them; all are welcome to their communion, without being obliged to change their religion; whilst with them they

practise outwardly none at all, frequenting neither mass nor sermon. Their assemblies are where they happen to be—to-day going to the Popish Chapel, next day to the Protestant Church, and sometimes to none at all, through the whole year or their life-time: professing an indifference for all; looking upon acts of piety as things external, and rather tending to alienate the soul and mind from internal commerce with God. And this leads us to the last we shall mention in this Chapter, (till we come to the corrupted Church of Rome) namely, the

Quietists, sectators of the Jesuit Molino; which at present make such noise in the world, because in so many things they resemble the *Antoinettes*.

This Jesuit, being a Spaniard, appeared first at Naples, and seems to have been a species of those *illuminati*, who formerly acted their part in Spain.

Their worship is almost altogether as invisible, only that they not only speak with indifference, but with some zeal against all ordinances (of which sort others have been even in this our country). Their prayers and devotions are wholly mental; they reject rosaries, houses, and offices, sacraments, masses, resigning themselves wholly to the motions of the spirit within, quiet and without concern; so that the only means to obtain this tranquil state is that which they term *inaction*, which, by a cessation of all prayer and desires, ends in a kind of exinanition of all their faculties; on which the Holy Spirit is invited to descend. *Sileant creaturæ, et Dominus loquatur.*

During this exercise, they shut out all external objects, and seem hardly to use any function of life and sense, as in an ecstasy or illapse, whilst God is himself speaking immediately within them. But enough of these.

Our mystic Theologues, Father Barnes, Madame Therise, have much of this, though not altogether so refined; for which we refer the curious to their books.

But thus far have unguarded zeal, spiritual pride, ignorance, and melancholy, prevailed on some persons, whilst all should admire no men's fancies or pretences, but what is proof with Scripture, that sure Word of Prophecy. For it is certain Christ will never appear in any of these sectarian ways; forewarning us that, whereas many shall say, *Lo! here is Christ, and there is Christ,* we should not believe them; for many false Christs shall come, and shall deceive many.

We have already spoken sufficiently of the Pagan, Jewish, and philosophical errors, which cannot so properly be ranked amongst the heresies, as having never been Christian. Yet, forasmuch as many Atheists have outwardly professed that worthy name, such we are also to number among the archest of them, especially such as strike at the most fundamental Christian truths, and whose doctrines comply not with the necessary and innocent formalities of government. Such at no hand are tolerable, nor their leaders, who are to be rather looked upon as monsters and madmen, than heretics. And happy it is, that they seldom appear but in single

parties, whose principles, if embraced by multitudes, would soon put the world in confusion.

Of these, besides some Anabaptists and Fifth-Monarchists we have mentioned, was the devilish John Basilides, Duke of Muscovy, one who, whilst he prayed and fasted in a prodigious manner, leading a severe life, was yet never outdone by Nero, Caligula, or Domitian, in wickedness and cruelty. This impostor pretended visions and revelations, and some thought the Devil took advantage of the enthusiastic devotee, to represent himself an angel of light, encouraging him in his inhuman courses.

Such was the blasphemous *Hacket*, who so exceeded in ardent prayer, that he would draw tears, and even ravish his hearers.

Instruments of such extraordinary talents, both as to preaching and praying, God sometimes permits, when men are weary and do not profit under sound doctrine. And so most of the wicked doings in the world have prospered under a mask of piety, as by sad experience we have felt and seen, by the murder of our excellent King, and the progress of our late zealots, usurping both Church and State, to the bringing-in of those damnable heresies amongst us, and leading away very many innocent and simple persons, besides those who came into their party, out of ambition, faction, revenge, covetousness, hypocrisy, discontent, to the almost total subversion of all religion. For this sort of seducers and leaders of parties are commonly passionate and furious, vehement in their reproof of others, indulgent

to themselves, full of spiritual pride, impatient of contradiction, sour in conversation, unsociable, detracting, implacable, and always complaining of others' sin. They cancel the memorials of the greatest mysteries of our Redemption. Their confession and catechisms consist chiefly of speculative notions, abstractions, raptures, and illapses; yet seldom do they die in cold blood for their religion; but elect their proselytes from among the wealthy, vitious, and easy, as all experience has shown the world. In a word, by their fruits ye shall know them.

We omit to speak of Vanini, Pomponati, Bruno, Spinosa, Hobbs, and other theists, not willing to bring Descartes and our late pure Materialists (making men but engines), into the list. The pride, ostentation, and singularity, among some of them render them suspected to be either of no or very little religion, whilst they have asserted principles so destructive to it. Such our late philosopher of Malmesbury, who tells us that there is no such thing as good or evil, justice or injustice, but that power and dominion is the measure of right and wrong; that subjects are to conform to the religion of the State; and of the same opinion the Theologico-politician Spinosa and his singular sectators.

SECTION IV.

OF THE CORRUPTIONS OF THE ROMISH CHURCH.

PART I.

1. HOLY SCRIPTURE NOT THE RULE OF FAITH.
2. LEGENDS.
3. IMAGE WORSHIP.
4. RELICS.
5. SHAM-MIRACLES.
6. JUBILEES.
7. INDULGENCES AND PARDONS.
8. PURGATORY.
9. MONASTIC ORDERS.

PART II.

1. ERRONEOUS DOCTRINES.
2. FALSE SACRAMENTS.
3. TRANSUBSTANTIATION.
4. OF THE INTENTION OF THE PRIEST.
5. DENIAL OF THE CUP TO THE LAITY.
6. DEIFICATION OF THE VIRGIN MARY.

PART III.

1. PAPACY.
2. CONCLUSION.

Thus have we briefly surveyed most of the ancient and later heresies, sects, schisms, and dissensions from the Christian faith. Amongst which there is hardly yet any to be found that has more endangered, disturbed, and corrupted the pure and saving doctrine of the Spouse of Christ, His Holy Catholic Church, than those who most of all arrogate to themselves the only name of CATHOLIC, as peculiar to them alone, whilst, by the adjunct to it, they fall into so notorious and illogical a contradiction. And these are the maintainers of the present Roman Pontifician Tridentine doctrine, rightly enough by the reformed styled *Papists* and *Papalines;* and by some their religion, anti-Christian.

It is not here mentioned last, because the newest, (for the mystery of this iniquity began to work betimes),

but because they have of the latest, that is, from the time of the Trent Council, adopted so many errors and things altogether indifferent, and some notoriously false, into Articles of Faith implicit, and as doctrines infallible, which are, in truth, but men's traditions.

These, therefore, I have reserved, to bring up the rear, who else indeed may be called the captain and ringleader of all the rest, or as retaining something from the very Heathen and Pagans, as will appear in this recension. In the mean while, the true Christian religion, (to which all pretend) miserably since perverted, was of old reverend for its pure and naked simplicity. For when afterwards, persecution ceasing by the conversion of the Emperors to the true faith, the Church being cherished by them, it grew opulent and at ease; and when they began to set it out with the flourishes of philosophy, mingled with Jews, Greeks, and other proselytes, who cast in the ceremonies of their countries, that so the majesty of it might appear more pompous and splendid, and invite the unconverted Pagans; though, doubtless, something of this might be convenient at first, as decently (and not tumultuarily at once) to bury former superstitions and inveterate usages; yet, by continuing them too long, and growing fond of them when that necessity was past, they became the opinions of men; first, perhaps, but of private persons and families, but at last the judgment of some Churches, and so by degrees and custom or for interest, (while the bishops and spiritual watchmen slept or were perverted) and by the eloquence of orators

and the suffrages of corrupted synods, (after the first four General Councils) were changed into necessary laws, decrees, and ordinances, which, through ignorance of succeeding times, by subtle and dark disputes, and scholastical niceties, have been ever since defended.

These advantagers, the Bishops of Rome, men of unlimited authority and ambition, prevailing over the facility and ignorance of Princes, in those dark times, began to insinuate themselves into State affairs; and, whilst the Emperors were absent and distracted by wars and dissensions elsewhere, begun and fomented by these crafty men, settled themselves in the chief and metropolitan city; at first, but as in trust only, being reputed holy and religious persons; but in time challenging it as their own, fortified by a pretended and notoriously forged, chimerical donation of Constantine, the first Christian Emperor, and by like acts, during those confused times in the Roman State through the Christian world, when growing jealous of Constantinople, and other cities of Asia and Egypt, and fearing to be eclipsed, the Bishops of Rome began to establish a kind of ecclesiastical kingdom and polity, in which Cardinals, creatures of their own making from simple priests, but now of none but Princes and great persons, being Judges lateral—they assumed the very height of empire: and under the title of *Servi Servorum*, in effect proclaim themselves *Domini Dominorum*, Christ's only Infallible Vicars upon Earth, above all principalities and powers whatsoever, and taking to

themselves a Triple Crown, as reigning over Earth, Hell, and Heaven.

And because, indeed, most of the western parts had received a Christianity from Rome, while the successors of St. Peter were entirely orthodox, all the rites of the Latin Church were embraced, and the Latin tongue in all her offices, as being then the common and vulgar language. But, not content with this, they by degrees introduce and bring in all things else sacred into their power; impose and set forth new decrees, interpret the old, and alter what they please. And that these matters might not be looked into, sacrilegiously they take away the Holy Scriptures out of the hands of the people, making it almost capital in them so much as to have or read them, lest they should discover the avarice, pride, simonry, and fraud of their corrupt mysteries and traditions, tending only to their profit, honour, and secular advantages. And this proceeding to that height of exorbitance, and rendering it no longer tolerable, made a necessity of reformation, most providentially assisted by the sudden and remarkable appearance of the most learned and pious men that had been for a thousand years before.

These, aided by the no less admirable invention of printing, began with more ease to examine the truth of things; and by preaching, conferences, and writing, to discover the monstrous and intolerable corruptions of the Roman Church.

PART I.

1. HOLY SCRIPTURE NOT THE RULE OF FAITH.

Touching the Holy Scriptures, (which are the source and living fountain of all truth) the Romanists regard it not as the Rule of Faith, adopt most of the Apocryphal Books into the Canon, making them and their own traditions of equal authority with the Divine Oracles, not only against the current of all antiquity, but asserting by them divers doubtful matters, as of faith, and some notoriously erroneous. As to the text, they prefer the vulgar Latin before the Hebrew and Greek, which are the true originals, concealing them and all translations from the people. They say, the Holy Scriptures are incompetent to decide controversies, or examine doctrines by, because there is, indeed, no mention in them of their Purgatory, Indulgences, Private Masses, Image-worship, Invocation of Saints, Pilgrimages, Reliques, and other impertinences, which they fear to hazard, if brought to that touchstone, or consent of the Universal Church and Councils, for above four hundred years after Christ. In a word, nothing is more common among the controvertists than that the Scriptures are of no absolute necessity, are obscure, insufficient, have no self-authority, were consulted upon occasion only; that divers Books are lost, or have been altered, and they dispense with sundry things commanded in them, and challenge the Church's approbation, (that is, the Roman,) which gives the right and true interpre-

tation of Scripture. They make tradition the Rule of Faith, or a Council wherein the Pope presides.[1]

And, as they conceal the Scriptures, so retain they the public service and devotions in a tongue understood by the Priests alone. They affirm the Church to be a Corporation or society of men, professors of the same faith, and in communion of the same sacraments, under legitimate pastors, whereof the Pope is chief. That this Church has been always visible and infallible, and that out of it is no salvation, damning all Christians in the world besides themselves.

2. LEGENDS.

They substitute abundance of Legends and pious frauds, recounting the lives and examples of some who never were, and of others who, being reputed saints, are set out with blasphemies and ridiculous extravagances beyond the very Alcoran; as that St. Francis was Chancellor, High Treasurer, and Privy Councillor of Christ, and made of the same spirit with God; that he had all the virtues of the saints in both Testaments; that Friar Leon saw him descend from heaven, having in his hand a scroll, in which was written, *This man is the grace of God;* and that, being indisposed, St. John

[1] I am not willing to bring the Fathers into this list; yet it being so evident that there were mistakes—not to call it corruption, comparable to that of the Church of Rome—they are not to be passed by, for caution at least, and that we may not be carried away to error by great names; no, though angels should preach any other doctrine.

the Baptist, St. John the Evangelist, the Blessed Virgin, and St. Michael, the archangel, came to comfort him; whilst an angel played him asleep with a fiddle, and immediately healed him; that the nature of man (like Christ) was dignified by him; that at every anniversary of his birth souls were *gratis* loosed from Purgatory.

It would fill a volume but to describe a few more of these pretended Saints, the miracles they performed, and a thousand impertinent trifles, full of the grossest fables, which yet they preach to the people, and recommend for their invitation; as those of St. Anthony, Christopher, Nicolas, and others—full of superstition, things ridiculous, and (as St. Peter's expression[1] is) *cunningly devised fables.* For they invoke, build altars to, worship St. Lazarus, which St. Chrysostom affirms to be a parable only; St. Martin, who waited, forsooth, upon our Blessed Lord at the Table, when He instituted the Holy Eucharist; chased the Pagans out of France in the time of the Goths; whereas, neither then, nor ages after, did that nation come into France. St. Ursula's eleven thousand Virgins; St. George, the Lady, and the Dragon, which was, doubtless, but an emblem; St. Dominic, patron of the Jacobites, who, causing above two hundred thousand poor Albigenses to be murdered, was, with St. Francis of Assisi, compared to Christ.

3. IMAGE-WORSHIP, &c.

They adore and worship Images, and quite take away

[1] I. Peter, ii., 16.

part of a moral and express Commandment of the first Table of the Decalogue, cutting the fragment in two, to supply the number. And thus, they paint and carve God the Father like a withered decrepid old man; worship and invocate angels, though this is positively forbidden; call the Blessed Virgin Mary Saviouress—nay, Goddess, Queen of Heaven; bid her command her Son. They worshipped the statue of Venus instead of her, not long since at Turin; and they have (as amongst the Pagans) tutelaries for every trade, office, and even for cattle and other brutes—as hogs, horses, geese, chickens; also for diseases for sore eyes, St. Roche; St. Clare, for headache; for the tooth-ache, St. Apollinus; St. Augustine, for sore breasts; St. Ægidius, for pregnant women; Bellinus, for mad dogs; St. Clement, the Mariner's patron; St. Hubert, the hunter's, and for field-sports; Aubin, the fisher's; St. Cecilia, the musician's; Mary Magdalene, the strumpet's; Crispin, the shoemaker's, &c., like the topical and tutelar gods of the heathen. To these, as we noted, they dedicate magnificent Churches, erect altars, shrines, and statues, before which they prostrate, worship, and fall down—invoke incense, and offer candles, lighted at noon-day, and consumptive oblations, masses, waters, vests, stations of indulgences, of lustrations, sprinkling both men and cattle.

To these they make costly processions, in rich copes, banners; adorn their altars with pixes, tabernacles, crosses, censers, make vows as to co-mediators, rely upon their protection. To these they consecrate not only

places, but devote their children, putting them in the fantastical habits of the Capuchin; and think that dying in St. Francis's coat is of great efficacy, and the being girt with the friar's cord.

To these they go in pilgrimage to St. James of Compostella, Notre Dame of Montserrat, of Chartres, and St. Michael, and St. Thomas of Canterbury; to our Lady, under a thousand denominations, *De Vertu, De Grace;* and, above all, to the Shrine and House at Loretto; the fable of whose miraculous translation has acquired immense riches and treasures to that *Diana.* And so has the worship of the Blessed Virgin prevailed, not only beyond any Saint, Angel, or Apostle, but even of our Saviour himself; the Christian religion being now become, in a manner, wholly *Marian,* to whose altars the richest offerings are brought, as among the Pagans were to the shrines of Apollo, at Delphos, Thebes, Ephesus, &c. For these ladies sell pardons and indulgences, and, for money, whatever you would beg of God himself, namely, grace, repentance, and remission of sins. And, therefore, Bellarmine calls them *Redemptores nostri aliquo modo, et Numina;* which latter word we know signifies *Gods;* and on St. Nicholas's day they pray, *Ut ejus meritis et precibus à Gehennæ incendiis liberemur;*[1] so, on the octaves of St. Peter and St. Paul, and the Feast of St. Bonaventura; so that Cassander Cane of that communion says plainly, they come full home to the superstition of the Heathens.

[1] ["That by his merits and prayers we may be delivered from the fires of Hell."]

To these, with subtile wires and neurospastic springs, they give, now and then, various motions of head, and eyes, which they have made to weep; as did that ingenious French monk, who, conducting a vine branch through the wall into the image's head, by a hole bored through the pupil of its eye, and cut at the spring, made abundance of tears to fall, to the great admiration of her devotees, and no less gain and veneration of the convent.

4. WORSHIP OF RELICS.

They worship the reliques and rotten bones of reputed saints, and adore fragments of the supposed material Cross, (which they hold to be inherently holy, and has faculty to take away sins) with the nails, thorns, spear, instruments, of putting our most Blessed Saviour to all that torture, with the same worship they do our Lord himself; though of this wood and these nails there are more than would load many carts with the timber and iron heads of spears. Besides, there are the Virgin's milk, hair, smock, &c.; some of our Blessed Saviour's most precious blood; St. Michael's sweat, when he fought with the Devil; a feather of Gabriel's wing; the paring of St. Edmund's nails; and other relics too abominable to be named.

They attribute to holy water, sufflations, &c., the virtue of cleansing sin and exorcising evil spirits, and consecrate medals, roses, chaplets, scapulas, amulets, and periaptas, as of great efficacy to charm the Devil, and protect from danger. Thus they also use enchantments, conjurations, cursings, of salt, spittle, oil, and

other trash, even in the very Sacraments; christening of bells, sanctifying of candles, swords, branches of palm, children's clouts, swaddling-bands, and what not.

All these, I say, they adore, worship, revere, and pray to, though expressly against the whole tenour, not only of Holy Scripture, but the writings of Clement, Lactantius, Vigilantius, Epiphanius, the Council of Eliberis, the Council of Constance,[1] and Gregory the Great;[2] that of Frankfort and Charles the Great; from the year 300 to the present age.

Irene, the Empress, who restored them, deposed her son, Constantine the Sixth, when she had put out her husband's eyes and children's. Eutropius affirms, she used such cruelty against them, that for eighteen days the sun in the firmament seemed to be darkened at noon-day. Finally, she took Constantine the Fifth's body (her father-in-law) out of his grave; and, burning it publicly, cast his ashes into the sea; because he demolished images. At last, the vengeance of God overtook her; for, being accused of treason, she was condemned and exiled to Lesbos.

But, what is still more deplorable, war and discord were begun among the Princes of Christendom; the whole Western Empire being so divided and weakened by the practice of Pope Gregory the Third, that, revolting against the East, in the reign of Isaurus,[3] and Charles Martel, son of Pepin, advantage was given to the common enemy, the Turk, to invade the Eastern Empire, and this has been the gulf of its direful ruin.

[1] A. D. 765. [2] Epist., c. 9. [3] Anno 732.

And all this for the sake of their images and painted puppets. And by these are the souls of people turned from the Faith, to believe fables, and from their sole dependence on God and Christ to the invocation of the creature; thus changing the plain and simple, spiritual and rational worship, suitable to the Divine Nature, into horrible idolatry, ridiculous pageantry, empty forms, and endless and scandalous superstitions.

5. SHAM MIRACLES.

They pretend to *miracles*, which, being for those who do not believe, they never pretend to show any among Protestants; and yet, supposing they did them, if to establish false doctrine, they were at no hand to be believed; no, though an Angel came down from Heaven: (for we read, that the Arians and other Heretics did great wonders). Their missionaries, indeed, make some proselytes—more to the Virgin Mary than Christ, among the ignorant and dissolute; but Luther, Zuinglius, and Calvin, made more in fifty years, by preaching good doctrine, than all their missions and inquisition have done in a hundred. And this by dint of pure reason, without force or secular interests. So that, if the Roman religion were propagated by miracles, [the Reformed] must be true if without them; which is the far greater miracle.

But, as we see they do no miracles among the Reformed, and such as are inquisitive men, and who would be sure to examine them, without being imposed on; so most of those they pretend to have done elsewhere,

prove impostures. So, for instance, that famous miracle done by the four famous Jacobins at Berne, in Switzerland, who were deservedly burnt for having abused a poor Friar, in whom they made the five stigmata, in imitation of those pretended of St. Francis, to bring their convent into reputation. And this happened before that country was reformed. Innumerable were those pretended to have been done at St. Thomas's Shrine at Canterbury, as now at Loretto and other places, which brings immense riches to them.

6. JUBILEES.

The profit they reap by *jubilees* is infinite, through the flocking and resort of innumerable people of all ages and sexes to Rome, for visiting the seven churches there, to the great enriching not only of those reputed holy places, but the whole city; and, therefore, what was wont to be but once in fifty years, is now shortened to the half of that time. So true it is, that

——— Venalia Romæ
Omnia ———

even the very souls of men; the whole religion being a mere merchandize, where no sin whatever (as may be seen by their Book of Rules, or Tax, of the Chancery) but may be bought off with money; and this is publicly owned. And this produced that exorbitant doctrine of

7. INDULGENCES AND PARDONS.

Indulgences and Pardons, introduced by Pope Boniface the Eighth. And, lest men should neglect them,

because of those tedious journeys to the holy market, Rome, they are to be had anywhere for money. And some were ordered to go about, and preach up the purchase, as in Germany, in 1492. This was in terms so impudently sordid, that Luther, taking offence, was the occasion of undeceiving those poor people, to begin the Reformation, which afterwards ensued, and continues to this hour.

To these follow works, not only in themselves meritorious, as causes efficient, but of supererogation and promerit for others. Of this treasure, the Pope having the key, he may dispense the supervacuous duties of others (who do more than is required for their salvation) to sinners who have no merit of their own. These are openly sold, and are good church-merchandize.

8. PURGATORY.

But none of these do warm the Vatican Kitchen, comparably to the fire of *Purgatory*, (called the Treasury of the Church) being that third place, into which the souls of such venial sinners, as have not done due penance here, and made full satisfaction, are purified in tormenting flames, till made fit for Heaven. To which they cannot yet be admitted, till St. Peter's Vicar, who has the keys, releases them. But the time may be much shortened, by paying a good sum of money. In this place they have four apartments, the lowest of which is Hell; next to that one for venial sins, pardoned as to guilt, not as to sense. Children, dying unbaptized, have another quarter, and suffer only *pœnam*

damni, non sensûs. Besides these, there is a *Limbus Patrum;* out of all which to escape (Hell excepted, whence no redemption), good works, that is, store of money, especially building and endowing monasteries, prayers of the living, and masses, which all cost money, do avail infallibly.

9. MONASTIC ORDERS.

To keep up the reputation of holiness and mortification in their Church, whilst the Pope and his Cardinals and creatures enjoy the riches and dignities of the world, they have divers orders of monks—melancholy, idle, ignorant, and superstitious men, who, whilst they have all things abounding in most of their convents, go wandering about, some of them, in fantastic habits, making a great show of austerity, while they live idly upon the sweat and labour of poor people. Of these some few are eremites, anchorites; others, begging friars, lazy and illiterate, pretending to be of Divine institution, from the example of Elias, St. John the Baptist, &c., though, in truth, but the corrupted imitation of those poor Christians, who were compelled to abandon their countries, and live in deserts, to avoid the persecution and barbarous invasions of the Goths and Vandals. These, some of them, flying into Egypt and other solitudes, working for their livings, and meeting for the service of God, as they had opportunity, without domestic incumbrances by reason of the present distress,—gathered afterwards into communities, and, living very devout and innocent lives, invited many to

join with them, but without those vows of celibacy and other impositions and rules full of superstition,—challenging exemption from all secular jurisdiction, while devouring the labours of others,—so as some whole countries, especially Spain, filled with these drones, are almost become desert of industrious men. Whereas, the first eremites were most of them honest laymen, who took pains for their livelihood, eat sparingly, gave what they earned and could get for the poor, did not beg from house to house, did not tempt God by vows of obedience, poverty, continence, which they had no ability to keep, and were clad like other men, living in poor cottages, not in stately, superb, and richly endowed edifices, more like princes' palaces than cells of mortified monks.

Virgins, also, living chastely and recluse, did not oblige themselves by vows, without their parents' consent, and wives without their husbands', as since they have. Nor were they cloistered in monasteries, nor changed their names as now, calling their order a second baptism, and the way of perfection, filled with pride, vain-glory, and singularity; but, all this while, so many more sworn subjects to the Pope, owning no jurisdiction to those princes under whose jurisdiction they were born.

Young boys, made friars, affected to be called fathers, to the great dishonour and neglect of the venerable Bishop and Priests, as acknowledging themselves under no visitor, save the Pope alone.

That which at first was recommended to those only

who could receive it, and in times (as we said) of persecution and unsettlement, was enjoined by Popes to all persons who would enter into orders; which exposed them to temptations and secret lusts. Whereas, St. Paul, who tells us that marriage is honourable in all men, makes it the character of a Bishop to have educated his children, and not to abandon their wives; whilst these, contemning the Ordinances of God, allow and magnify concubinage before it; by which unheard-of tragedies and libidinous commerce have been acted between nuns and friars, as at Padua, Venice, in Spain, Naples, and especially in France of late, as appears from the public fact and trials, upon inspection of the Convent of Provence, the amorous letters, histories, and novels in everybody's hands, where the lubricity and incontinency are set forth, to the shame of the devotees.

Parents compel their children of both sexes to take the habits and profess against their consent, and before they are at all acquainted with their own strength. To support which, they allowed courtezans rather than marriage, by which monkery is exalted as a state of greater perfection; marriage, in the mean time, which God has sanctified by His own ordinance, and whence all blessings come, is called and esteemed by them impure. Whereas, there is nothing more slovenly and impure than their orders. What pride and contention was there for pre-eminence in the time of Sextus the Fourth! and among the Franciscans concerning their fool's cap, in a process long maintained by a chargeable and bloody suit! So that in a New Testament in the

vulgar Latin, printed in Venice by *Tribantius Paganus*, in the year 1544, the frontispiece represents the Devil clad in a friar's frock, taking our Blessed Saviour by the hand to tempt Him.[1]

Other orders have they of *Flagellators*, especially in pompous public processions, for the more solemness of it; and sometimes porters and wretched men are hired to whip themselves upon these occasions, a spectacle plainly barbarous and Pagan-like.

PART II.

1. ERRONEOUS DOCTRINES OF THE CHURCH OF ROME.

Original Sin they affirm to be in the flesh only, not in the soul or will.

That the Blessed Virgin was immaculate and without sin.

That some actual sins are, of their own nature, venial; and that even an unregenerate man by his own strength may perform divers good works, and co-operate with the grace of God. They affirm that the good works of just men are absolutely just, and may fulfil the entire law, and that even an unregenerate person

[1] Consult St. Jerome, (*Epist. ad Rust.*) where speaking of certain monks—"Quosdam ineptos homines, Monachos dæmoniorum contra se pugnantium portenta confingere, ut apud imperitos et vulgi homines miraculum sui faciant, et exinde lucra sectentur." "Sunt (says he) qui humore cellarum immoderatisque jejuniis, tædio solitudinis, et nimiâ lectione, vertuntur in melancholiam. Sunt qui ciliis vestiuntur, et cucullis fabrifactis, ut ad infantiam redeant: imitantur noctuas et bubones," &c. What can more exactly characterize this sort of men?—who more condemn them?

may merit the grace of Justification, *ex congruo*, by good works; and that they who are justified by infusion of inherent righteousness merit *ex condigno*.

That good works are meritorious and efficient causes; that fasting and alms satisfy and merit, and that it may be given of ill-gotten goods.

They say, that the elect may finally and totally fall away from grace; and that sins and works foreseen are the cause of God's absolute decrees.

That grace is conferred by Sacraments *ex opere operato*[1].

That women and laymen may baptize, and that oil, spittle, and salt are necessary ingredients in that rite, and that infants dying unbaptized are damned,—that baptism does totally *abolish* original sin,—that witnesses of baptism may not intermarry without a dispensation.

They affirm, that our Blessed Saviour's sufferings merited for himself.

That faith may subsist, void of charity.

That contrition is the cause of remission, and that attrition without contrition is sufficient, and they make unheard-of distinctions, from doctrines they call *probable*, that is, if held by any of their late doctors, who have in their casuistical treatises or practice favoured any sin, be it ever so impious, as murder, incest, adultery, parricide, perjury, sacrilege, theft—those, guilty of any of these sins, may be absolved after confession; discharging men from the most facinorous crimes both to God and man, without all sense of virtue.

[1] [i.e. Independent of the state of mind of the recipient.]

They hold *Equivocation* lawful, and that no faith is to be kept with heretics. *Fidem hæreticis datam, servandam non esse, et posse concilium eos punire,* &c.

That kings and superior magistrates may be excommunicated, killed, and destroyed, (if not of their religion) and their dominion given away to whom the Pope pleases, and he may discharge subjects from their allegiance.

They hold, that the Catholic Church was not only always visible, but its marks to be universality, continuance, succession, unity in doctrine, miracles, temporal felicity, &c.

That the repetition of the same prayers, Aves, Paters, Creeds, numbered a thousand times upon beads, though they neither know nor mind what they say, are good and acceptable devotion, with their mystic and enthusiastic theology and rapturous nonsense.

That changing flesh for the most delicious and costly sorts of fish, wines, sweetmeats, and fruits, is a proper fast, and yet that adultery, &c., itself is not so great a sin as the breaking of a fast, or the eating of flesh on Friday.

They use the Scriptures, and make the public Prayers, Liturgies, and Masses in a tongue altogether unknown, and not understood by the common people, totally against the Apostle's doctrine; turning their music (for which they make poor children eunuchs) and all their other services and ceremonies into theatricals; with light and superstitious gestures, no wise becoming the gravity of God's solemn worship. Their altars and

churches are full of statues and paintings of naked figures, in scandalous and light postures, so that, to behold their decorations and liberty in that kind, one would rather think it many times a Temple of Venus than a Church of Christ.

2. FALSE SACRAMENTS.

That matrimony is a Sacrament, but prohibited to priests; and early it was so, (as St. Paul predicted[1]) and as zealously did the *Greek Church* protest against it as a tyranny. Then Pope Silvester, in a Council at Nice, approved it, and forbade it again. Then Leo maintained it. Pelagius forbade it again; and Gelasius asserts it. Hilderic, Bishop of Strasburgh, opposed the prohibition, and wrote against the Pope about it. And so, the Council of Tours ordered, that a bishop might have his wife. But when afterwards a canon of Mantua, being accused at Rome for having had several children by his wife, and appearing to the process, this remedy was found to protect him from the censure, by proving she was but his mistress, and not his wife, and all her children bastards. Upon which the Pope allowed of it, and dismissed him with his benediction.

Another Sacrament is

Penance, and faith no part of it.

Confession, auricular to a priest, is another Sacrament, and necessary to salvation; and the penitent is absolved, before any part of the penance or reformation be performed, and then oftentimes most ridiculous penances

[1] I. Tim. iv. 3.

are enjoined. They take also confessions from persons utterly unknown, enjoining the relation of all circumstances, be they ever so indecent and shameful; and this to young priests, who pretend to continence, and should avoid temptations and speculative follies. Particulars of this nature may be seen in their Book of Cases, most abominable to be related. They hold, likewise, that for the most horrid sins contrition is not necessary to repentance; and that passing this form once in the year at a set time, the most notorious sinner is as clear as if he had never offended, to the wonderful encouragement of wicked sinners, and very grateful to the voluptuous.

Confession to some grave and holy man, both for direction and absolution, may be of effect to the pacifying of a disturbed and unresolved conscience, but was never imposed upon Christians as an article of faith or Sacrament; the original of it being for the receiving of some poor Christians, who having been prevailed on by the Gentiles, (and to avoid persecution) to sacrifice, and offer incense to their idols, were so afflicted in conscience, that they could have no peace, till they had acknowledged their fault to the bishops, and received their counsel and comfort, upon their hearty repentance. This growing a burden to the bishop, by reason of the multitude of the people flocking to him, he ordered that they should go to some of the priests, and relate their cases to them. But in time a great scandal having occurred in the very church at Constantinople, *Auricular Confession* (as since called) was quite abo-

lished by Nectarius, their patriarch, in the reign of the Emperors Valens and Theodosius. Yet, for many and great politic ends, it was kept up at Rome, as that by which they dive into all the secrets and interests both of persons, and families, of princes, states, and particular persons. And useful it is for the doctrine of mortal and venial sins, (as they distinguish them) and that of satisfaction.

In the mean time, it is horrid to consider, that young and healthful virgins and wives should be made, on pain of damnation, to reveal all intimacies and circumstances of their thoughts and actions to young friars, and a great temptation and gratification to the curiosity of a lazy sort of men.

Order is another Sacrament, and so is

Extreme Unction, which they pretend is available for the doing away of remaining sins.

3. TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

But, above all, most prodigious and absurd are the opinions touching the Blessed Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, in which they affirm the body and blood of our Blessed Saviour to be transubstantiated; namely, that the body of our Lord, blood, bones, soul, and divinity itself, is in all its natural dimensions and parts reduced to an atom, wherein yet it exists in its length, breadth, thickness, without taking up either place or space; and, though it retains the accident of colour, taste, touch, smell, and shape, yet they inhere in no subject, so that Christ (God blessed for ever!) devoured Him-

self, and brake it, and shed His blood, before He was crucified! that sacrifice is made and offered without destruction of the oblation; that it is sufficient to communicate in *one* kind, notwithstanding the Lord's express institution, that all should drink of the cup, as well as eat of the bread.

That the elements are to be adored, and water mixed with the wine.

That the priest is only concerned to receive alone.

That it is a propitiatory sacrifice for the dead as well as for the living, every mass, and this blessed body and blood of our Saviour in a million of places at the same time.

4. THAT THE INTENTION OF THE PRIEST CONSECRATING IS NECESSARY.

And, after all this, both as to this and other Sacraments, the intention of the priest consecrating, baptizing, or conferring any of the rest, is absolutely necessary; so that, if he do not mind or intend what he is doing, there follows no baptism or consecration of the elements; and consequently, if the priest happen to be either Jew or Infidel, (as many such have been) the infant is still a Heathen, and the participants of the Holy Eucharist bread-worshippers and gross idolaters, by their own confession.

5. DENIAL OF THE CUP TO THE LAITY.

As to the taking away the cup from the people, hear the bold words of the Council of Constance, a thousand

years after its institution.[1] A Christian, by the definition of this Council, may be a heretic for adhering to the institution of our Lord Christ, in the very matter of the Sacrament, as Bishop Laud well observes.

6. DEIFICATION OF THE VIRGIN MARY.

To that height of veneration is that of the Blessed Virgin amongst them, that, not content with their own eulogies, they have turned the whole Psalms of David, so as to make the Blessed Virgin a Deity; as, wherever the name of Lord or God is in the whole Psalter, there it is changed into the name of Mary or our Lady, throughout, and this is called the *Psalter of Bonaventura.* In like manner, they have dealt with the *Te Deum,* and other sacred hymns; and introducing their

[1] Licèt Christus, post cœnam, instituerit, et suis discipulis administraverit sub utrâque specie panis et vini hoc venerabile Sacramentum, Tamen hôc non obstante non debet confici post cœnam, nec recipi nisi à jejunis. Et similiter, quod licet in primitivâ Ecclesiâ Sacramenta reciperentur sub utrâque specie à fidelibus, tamen hæc consuetudo, ut à laicis sub specie panis tantùm suscipiatur, habenda est pro lege, quam non licet reprobare; et asserere hanc esse illicitam est erroneum; et pertinaciter asserentes, sunt arcendi tanquam hæretici.

"Altho' Christ instituted this venerable Sacrament after supper, and gave it in both kinds to his disciples, yet, notwithstanding, we ought not to celebrate it after a meal, nor receive it except fasting. In like manner also, though in the primitive Church the faithful received it in both kinds, yet this custom of withholding the cup from the laity is to be reckoned as a law, which we may not gainsay. To assert it to be unlawful is to fall into error; and those who persist in this error are to be expelled as heretics."

critical and scholastic Theology, suppositious Epistles, Decretals, their Canonists, Casuists, Legendaries, &c., chimerical donations of Constantine, to support their novelties with their false versions, citations, and other disingenuous practices notoriously known.

PART III.

1. THE PAPACY.

Now, the source of all these corruptions has been that great fable of Christendom, the

POPE,

or Bishop of Rome, the pretended Successor to St. Peter, and Vicar upon Earth, Head of the Universal Christian Church; that he never did or can err, being the Infallible Judge of all Controversies whatsoever; and can dispense with vows, oaths, contracts, incestuous mixture, and even with the Laws of God, in all cases. Nay, that though he were a heretic or magician (as many of them have been), or ever so notoriously wicked; (such as was John the Twenty-second, deprehended in adultery; such as Alexander the Sixth, and Sextus the Fourth, Pius the Third, Julio the Second, Boniface, Silvester, &c., who worshipped the Devil, committed incest, proudly trod on an Emperor's neck, made Kings their lacqueys,) yet he cannot be the author of any false doctrine. That by his sole authority he has a spiritual co-active jurisdiction, obliging the conscience.

That his commission is immediate and by Divine right from Heaven; the rest of the Bishops but from him.[1]

That he has faculty to depose Kings, and to transfer their dominions.

Saints are canonized by him—some who never were in being, and none without vast sums of money: *Papa tunc quodammodo cogebatur ad canonizandum contra suam opinionem, et propterà protestabatur, &c.*, the Pope, being convinced of the fraud, has sainted some, who never were, says their ceremonial.[2]

He can not only pardon sins, but release from purgatory.

That he only has a right to summon General Councils, without the Emperor's consent, and in which he alone is Judge: and that particular Synods, called and confirmed by him, cannot err.

That all Scriptures are to be interpreted by him.

In a word, that he is the Supreme and Paramount Potentate of the Earth, Judge of all, but not to be judged or censured by any.

To this prodigious height of pride the Popes arrived, from the time of Phocas, who, affecting the empire, murdered his master Mauritius, cut off his wife's head, and Theodora, Tiberis, and Constantia, three of her children. During which confusions, the Pope usurped the Exarchate of Italy, and made himself a Prince so formidable, that Justinian, the Emperor, first kissed his feet. As Bishop of Rome, which was the metropolis of that empire, he had, indeed, precedency of place (not

[1] Bellarmine, de Rom. Pontif., l. 4, c. 22, 24. [2] L. 1, c. 2, sect. 6.

from any Divine institution), above the other Bishops in the Western Church. Advanced by the gift of Charlemagne and Pepin, he was to govern the Church only by the canons of the ancient councils and their decrees, not by his own, as now they do; whilst it is well known that the Councils of Constance and Basil (truly ecumenical) decreed a synod superior to him.

They formerly acknowledged a Pope might and did sometimes foully err in matters of fact, depending on man's testimony, or as a private Doctor in question of right, as of faith and manners, and by himself and particular councils in dubious matters; but not when decreeing in a general. But, though even this last were more than he could rightly challenge, yet are all these limitations now utterly abolished.

Whilst they pretend the guidance and determination of the Holy Spirit, they intrigue about elections by all the arts of policy, simony, and canvassing for suffrages; interposing the interest of secular princes, so that sometimes (as is known) sorcerers, magicians, incestuous, voluptuous men, infidels, and bloody tyrants have, by their own confession, been made the Vicars of Christ, supporting their worldly authority by cruel wars, massacres, implacable persecutions, and devilish machinations. Witness the Eve of St. Bartholomew at Paris, the hellish Powder Conspiracy, the butchery in Ireland, and what the Jesuits, their creatures, have wrought of confusion in Hungary, France, Piedmont, and whereever else they have been entertained; not to recite what their own Bishop Casas has related of their

inhuman cruelty in the West Indies, and their Histories of the Inquisition every day acquaint us with, beyond any thing which we read of among the most truculent Pagans.

As to the preaching of the wholesome word of God, it is now more than nine hundred years since scarcely one of them has appeared in the pulpit; and, though there be among them innumerable swarms of priests, monks, and friars, there are but few labourers, but such as fleece the flock, and feed them with false doctrine. Of these, some (as we have shown) do manifestly lead to an evil life, as that of *Attrition*, which is a low and imperfect sorrow for sin, though but on temporal hopes, fears, desires, which (say they) is a sufficient disposition to receive priestly absolution, and justifies before God.

The Popes, dispensing with oaths and the obedience of children to their parents, subjects to their Princes, &c., no faith with heretics, equivocation, the doctrine of adoring the Host for the Incarnate Jesus, worshipping images, purgatory, indulgences, infallibility, allowance of stews and courtezans, forbidding marriage as pollution, with all the rest we have enumerated, and many dangerous ones besides, were not so much as thought of during the first five hundred years after Christ, or to be found in the catalogue of any ancient Father.[1] Nor find we any branded for not holding those Articles, which the Reformed Churches reject, in

[1] Such as Epiphanius, Minutius Felix, Augustine, and other holy men.

their symbols and other treatises.[1] Take them altogether, there is not one Article of Faith, received by the Church of Rome at present, rejected by the Reformed, so much as mentioned even, much less controverted. And, when any of them before were, they were but as speculative points, undetermined, till that spurious Synod of Trent, when a few Bishops, such as they were (out of forty-eight, above twenty of Italian, made in a day or two, to serve a turn), and five Cardinals, representing the Universal Church, determined the great points of that assembly, without so much as hearing what could have been and was objected. For all things had been beforehand resolved upon at Rome, and His Holiness's pacquet was weekly brought, which directed what they were to carry.

It is notoriously known, that the French Church was for the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, in both kinds and service, in a known tongue; and that the Spanish was kept, by apparent violence, from daring to reform. No protestants were summoned or admitted to come thither, nor the Bishops of many great nations and kingdoms, both of the western and eastern Churches; no, nor one of the four Patriarchs appearing at the Assembly, though sitting so many years, or at all approving what they did. But so was this pretended

[1] Such as Irenæus' Unity of Faith (lib. i., c. 2); Origen's Introduction De Primariis; Tertullian Reg. Fidei; the conclusion of Epiphanius' Work, which he styles The Settlement of Truth and Assurance of Immortality; or, in later times, that Treatise of Gennadius, not above two centuries since, De rectâ Christianorum Fide.

Council managed, (all Christendom calling for the reformation of innumerable corruptions) that, instead of doing any thing towards it, there were no less than eleven new Articles added to their Creed, and these shut up with the anathema of Athanasius's symbol; which, whosoever did not believe, were *ipso facto* accursed, and deprived of salvation, by the most unheard of impudence, as their own more impartial and honest historians have recorded, beyond all contradiction.

By these and the like politics do the Bishops of this Holy See maintain their height, strengthening their dominion over the souls and bodies of Christians by laws of terror, which they first obtained of secular Princes by craft and violence. Nor could anything satisfy their severity against such as usurped their decrees, as if they had rebelled against God himself by blasphemy. For this they instituted the *Inquisition* with the most illimited power to examine upon oath whom they pleased, and under whose obedience soever. By this they insinuated and wound themselves into all the secrets and cabinets of Princes, and private persons' intrigues and concerns; and for this effect committed them to the most exquisite tortures and cruellest death, their accusers being not so much as known, nor the accused permitted to hear or refute witnesses.

And now, after all this, it would (as a learned Prelate[1] of our own suggests) make a suspicious man a little inquisitive into the particular doctrines of a Church, in which he finds that Indulgences, Jubilees,

[1] Dr. Jeremy Taylor.

Purgatory, Masses, and offices for the dead, are very profitable knacks; that the doctrine of the Primacy, Infallibility, superiority over Councils, of indirect power in temporals, the dignities and revenues of Cardinals and Pope's nephews are great instruments and temptations of secular honour. Whereas, if she should learn to lay down her grandeur at the foot of the crucifix, and really despise the world, and prefer Jerusalem before Rome, and Heaven above the Vatican, these opinions would not have in them any native strength, to support them against the perpetual assaults of those who speak so much reason and Scripture against them. So that, were it not for the Inquisition of Spain and the persecution in France, all Europe would soon reject the error, tyranny, and monstrous ignorance, and superstition they live under, without any Christian liberty of using their common sense and reason.

These things being so, how plainly evident it is that the Christian orthodox religion, described in the former chapter, was by institution a profession so contrary to these, and especially to what we have produced in this last, of the present Papal (which seems to be a complex of all the rest) that nothing can be more unlike; as consisting in the doctrines of the greatest simplicity imaginable, till first some of the Jews and other proud and ambitious men, and those (as we have said) for the most part of Churchmen, striving, *de summis sedibus*, began to turn it into an art. The consequences of which were the disputing of sublime and high mysteries and speculative researches, scholastical and unin-

telligible terms and distinctions, which rendered plain passages so intricate and perplexed, that the people were confounded, running from the Word of God, the plain and easy rules of Christian precepts, to those who hid and kept them from the Fountain of Truth, that they might advance their own reputation, designs, and interests, by nourishing them in ignorance and busy superstitions.

Thus was the pure religion miserably corrupted during eight or nine hundred years; all that blessed union which the Gospel came to establish broken and crumbled into sects and irreconcilable parties; placing the sincere faith in a multitude of ceremonies, rites, will-worship, and bodily exercises—eating out the vitals and spirit of religion; so that rare it was to find any true and sincere professors amongst those who bear the name of Christians. Hence wars, bloodshed, divisions, rebellion, heresies, sectaries, and enthusiasts, and many who were Atheists and libertines, turning the Grace of God into wantonness; yet all pretending their title from Holy Scripture, which holds forth nothing but peace, love, unity, meekness, loyalty, temperance—doctrines, diametrically opposite to what they practised, and were delivered by Christ and His Apostles. And this was so plain, that the meanest, simple people, poor women and illiterate persons, understood their duty. Nor yet lost it the majesty and reverence due to its Divine Original, nor its efficacy upon the most considerable; for it subdued the Roman Empire, the great and learned men were converted; and yet all the art they had to recommend and plant it, was by Scripture,

sermons, and plain discourses; so that now we must have either changed our religion (whilst we depart from their doctrine), or we are exceedingly mistaken in our methods of inquiring after it.

This I have endeavoured to do, in a brief recension of the most famous and dangerous heresies, heresiarchs, and dissenters from the true Catholic, Christian, and Primitive Religion; it being, indeed, sufficient only to have named some of them, to confute them, if applied to the Scripture, (which we have, upon reasons invincible, established, and acknowledge to be the genuine and only Rule of Faith,) by showing how widely they differ and prevaricate from the wholesome precepts and doctrine delivered from those Holy Oracles, the Word of Life and Pillar of Truth, constantly maintained and professed in the purest ages of the Church.

CONCLUSION.

Now, then, we make haste to show what, (after all these pretences, and all that has been said before in this Treatise), upon the utmost and most impartial inquiry, may appear, to unprejudiced men, the most defecate, sincere, safe, and orthodox Christian profession, both for doctrine and discipline; which will be the subject of the following and conclusive Chapter of this present Work. Not that, in the mean time, we dare affirm that all those we have put down in the catalogue of heretics and dissenters, or which are presumed to be so by Philastrius, Epiphanius, St. Augustine, and others, much less by the Popish Writers, or that deflect from

the purity of the Christian Faith, are all alike heretics. For instance, the necessity of *Pædobaptism* was not always so peremptorily determined, till about the eighth century; and therefore we should judge charitably, so long as the Ordinance be not despised. Many of the blessed Martyrs themselves suffered for the Faith, without it. Nor was Valentinian, the Emperor, baptized, whom St. Ambrose so highly celebrates. They all desired it, but were prevented. The doctrine of the Millennium was not condemned for heresy, though justly rejected; whilst the Donatists were, for their uncharity, condemning everybody but themselves, and denying communion to all who were not of their party; whereas, the zealous author of their opinions, not proscribing others, was still accounted Catholic.

It is one thing, (as our learned Boxhall says),[1] to communicate with material idolaters, heretics, and schismatics in their idolatry, heresy, and schism, (which is altogether unlawful), and another to communicate in pious offices and religious duties, which may, in some cases, be very lawful. For so the Orthodox Christians sometimes did with the heretical Arians, and the primitive Catholics with the schismatical Navatians. The Catholics called the Donatists brethren, though the Donatists were not so charitable to them.

Particular Churches may fall into errors, while all errors are not essential fundamentals, and such destroy not the being of a Church, though one ought to preserve himself from those errors. The foundation may

[1] See Reply to S. W. Refutation, &c., sect. 27.

be good, when the superstructure is but straw and stubble.

A true Church and a true Religion may have great corruptions and errors in it, yea, and that in matters of faith—such was that of the Church of Corinth, which was a true Church, and had a true Religion, though there were strange differences and opinions amongst them; as, whether the Mosaic Law was still obligatory, and about Circumcision; which were matters of faith. So that an error in fundamentals, not known to be an error, is not a damning error, though it excuse not. For heresy is an error in the will, not in the understanding; such as was that of denying Christ to be come in the flesh, the impure Nicolaitans, Gnostics, &c., so as a bad and vicious habit, drunkenness, fornication, and such wasting sins are worse than a false opinion.

Now, though this or that may seem to one to be the most consentaneous and agreeable to Scripture and antiquity; yet we ought to be in perfect charity with Christians of all professions, whose doctrines are not positively against the Revealed Word, and rightly informed reason, and with every individual person of some heterodox opinions, who are born (as it were) and educated in the opinion, and remain invincibly ignorant of better light, yet living sincerely; and that in what they do rightly, we may communicate with them, and intentionally should. Nay, even on the very Heathen, who never had the means, we are not to pass judgment; but to pity and pray for them, leaving them to a merciful God, and have much more favourable thoughts of their

condition and future state, (provided they live virtuously and morally), than of wicked, profligate, malicious, and profane persons, who go under the name, and wear the badge, of Christian.

Heresy, then, is not *every* difference of opinion. The word, in Scripture, is used in a different sense. Those who were meant of the worst, were openly called *Antichrists*, Pseudo-prophets; and such as broached impious opinions in practical matters, as those already named.

Nor may we here exempt the Papists, who adhere to those damnable doctrines of equivocation, idolizing saints and reliques, deposing princes, forbidding marriage, selling pardons, works of supererogation, and *Trent* additions. And who think all damned, who embrace not all their fopperies and superstitions, whereof some are as gross as any among the Pagans. To these let us, then, say, as St. Augustine,[1] of some of the Donatists: "Let them show, if they can, their Church not in discourse of noise and words, not in their councils, writings, and disputes, not in false and pretended miracles, against which our Blessed Saviour (foreseeing what would come to pass) has forewarned us; but let them show these things in the Law or Prophets, the Psalms, the Evangelists, or any of the Canonical Scriptures;" or to which, we add, the first General Councils.

In the mean time, none among Christians were persecuted for their bare opinions, during the first three hundred years after Christ, who came to plant the Gospel of Peace and charity; nor ought those to be, whose

[1] De Unitate Eccles., c. 18.

lives are innocent, though doctrine erroneous: since their error is to be accounted their misery, rather than their crime. And it is possible one may maintain an opinion damnable in itself, though not so to him who is ignorant of its malignity, and is (as we said) led into it invincibly. But then, indeed, his opinion shall burn, and the rubbish it was erected on, according to the Apostle.[1]

The mischief of the Church does not proceed from this, that men are not all of one mind, (which is impossible) but that every opinion is an Article of Faith, and every Article the ground of a bloody quarrel, and every quarrel of a faction.[2] While a holy and pious life will render our belief holy, if we consult not interest in our choice, but search the Truth, without other design than the getting to Heaven; and then, to be as careful to preserve charity, as we were to get a point of Faith, which, if true, is kept with the least trouble of any grace.

As to *schism* and *separation*, they are also different things; for, though no *schism* be without *separation*, there may be *separation* without *schism*; as, when it is made an occasion of some essential error. Such separation is not from the Church, but from the errors of some in the Church; taking *Church* for the external profession of it, not for the orthodox and veritable doctrine:[3] but of this in the following Chapter.

In like manner, uncharitable dissensions of particulars

[1] I. Cor., iii., 12-15. [2] Bp. Taylor.

[3] See Greg. Nazianz. Orat. 12.

are not imputable to the universal community of Orthodox Churches, whose harmony and consent in necessary points are to be estimated only by their public confessions. Thus, there are differences of doctrines and disciplines even among the Papists themselves, (who so much boast of union), as that the Pope may err; that a General Council is above him; that Ecclesiastical authority is immediately in the Prelates. They differ also about the Decrees of God, about the Scripture Canons, about Original Sin, Good Works, and several other tenets.[1]

In the mean while, unhappy and deplorable it is, that Christians are broken into so many fragments, and religion called by so many appellations of *Popish*, *Socinian*, *Anabaptist*, *Lutheran*, *Calvinian*, *Presbyterian*, *Independent*, &c. By which art Satan keeps up the faction, whilst in some there may be no considerable error as to doctrine and essential truth.

To conclude this Chapter, then, and at once give answer to the several pretenders and candidates of the Truth, and show what really it is we have been thus long contending for.

The True Religion is that which is most *ancient* and most *Catholic*, decent, simple, devout, void of novelty, singularity, and superstition. And, since nothing can add to or improve it, without a new Revelation, not of any Angel, (though from Heaven) but of God himself, there can be nothing new, no new light or sect, or which needs to support it, any trick; nothing incon-

[1] See Brenwood's Enquiry.

sistent with Government, or which confines it to a party, or that consists in scrupulous and impertinent niceties, censoriousness, rebellion, negligence; or whose religion and devotions are made up of pompous pageantry, processions, bloody flagellations, hair shirts, lousy, nasty rags, frocks, dead and dry bones, reliques, images, crosses, lustration, sufflation, conjuration, exorcisms, rosaries, beads, chaplets, agnuses, consecrated palms, scapulas, amulets, censings, blessed candles, sprinklings, oil and spittle, and such like trash, murmuring of *paters*, repetitions, antic postures, cringes, shaved crowns, disguising the countenance, artificial looks, pretended miracles, raptures, and transport, mouthing and barbarous tones, indulgences, pardons, rebellious principles, probable doctrine, new creeds, legends, unsound traditions, works of supererogation; nor, on the other side, in mere faith without works, to be a separate party.

But the True Religion is that which is but one; and such is that which Christ our Lord instituted, and such as was agreeable to all times, places, persons, and conditions; consisting of sound doctrine, sober reason, sincere piety, holiness and charity, self-denial, chastity, obedience to superiors, and of those seven characters of union, enumerated by the Apostle,[1] made up of one body, one spirit, one hope of our calling, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of All, who is above all, and through all, and in all. In a word, then,—consider what the same Apostle exhorts us to: try all things; hold fast that which is good. For from

[1] Ephes., iv., 4.

every sect and community of Christians something may be learned. For some may have a better confession; some, a better discipline; a third, fewer errors; and, by whatever instrument a holy life is advanced, to use and choose it, though we grind our spears at the Philistine's forge; considering that, as to the one thing needful, we have no master but Christ, no religion but Christian, no rule but Scripture, no law but right reason.

CHAPTER XII.

OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION, REFORMED FROM ITS CORRUPTIONS, AND RESTORED TO ITS PRIMITIVE PURITY, ESPECIALLY IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

We have hitherto shown the rise and progress of those errors, which have to this time, and still continue to break, crumble, obscure, hide, and pervert the truth, which we are all this time enquiring after; and by the dates of their nativity, tenets and principles, factions, interests, and arts, the Christian doctrine has been corrupted, and the discipline perverted by that old enemy of mankind working upon the passions and infirmities of men in all ages, manifestly repugnant both to Scripture, (which we have abundantly proved to be the oracles of God, and the only rule of faith) right reason, primeval antiquity, and solid argument.

We now therefore proceed to the last part of our undertaking, to show the reasons we have to reject, either totally or in part, all the foregoing religions, sects, and heresies, as gross and manifest decadences from the truly orthodox and Catholic; which, after all, we find to be the present CHURCH OF ENGLAND, the most purged, refined, and reformed, from whatever is spurious or drossy, or so much as even is rationally doubtful in the rest. Not yet pretending (as we have professed) altogether to condemn all, who through ig-

norance, infirmity, education, want of protection, and other unavoidable innocent prejudice, do not fully come up to her in every point of doctrine and discipline, or vary in things indifferent and not fundamental. They all stand or fall to their own masters, and many holy and excellent persons God has dispersed, as wheat among the tares and zizany, namely, such as cleave to all the saving truths of His Holy Gospel, who live humbly, charitably, innocently, justly, and devoutly; whilst there is one yet more choice and select assembly, which, from its true and apostolic antiquity, universality, purity, decency, and even visibility, we make choice of and may safely rely upon, (invoking the God of all truth to direct us in the search of that precious pearl, for the purchase of which the wise merchant parted with all he had) namely, the true Christian and Evangelical religion, vindicated from all imposture, and, upon due and impartial examination, bringing her to the test of God's holy and only infallible Word, and separating the ore from the dross.

And this we shall do, by first showing what is meant by the Church Catholic, her fundamental Faith, Creed, Confession, Worship, Sacraments; in a word, Doctrine and Discipline, confronted with the purest ages and Catholic Professors of the Church, before it was corrupted, and how, according to these characters, the happily reformed religion, as by law established and professed in the Church of England, is, by God's distinguishing and especial grace, the most apostolical and orthodox Christian Church, now extant in the world;

and that it is both lawful and necessary to purge and reform, when either corrupt in manners or doctrine, the Church of Christ; as it had, before His coming, power, so has it since, by the best examples of former times, Judæa reforming upon the wicked policy of Jeroboam, though Israel would not consent to join her.

Now, that the Church was in this sad and deplorable condition, all that we have produced in the former Chapter manifestly shows. Let us hear what even our adversaries themselves have owned and complained of. *Cùm infiniti abusus, schismatæ quoque et hæreses per totum hunc orbem invalescant, Ecclesiam Dei legitimâ indigere reformatione, nemini non apertum erit,* said Peter de Aliaco,[1] Card. Cameracensis, no less than three score years ere Luther was born. And the honest Cassander, speaking of the bishops of Rome—*Utinam illi, à quibus hæc reformatio accipienda esset, non ipsi harum superstitionum auctores essent, vel certè eas in animis hominum simplicium aliquando quæstûs causâ nutrirent.*[2]

SECTION I.

DEFINITION OF CHURCH CATHOLIC.

1. CHURCH.

Now, then, as to what is meant by the Church, (taken extensively) the name was first to signify the whole

[1] Lib. De Reform. "Since numberless abuses, schisms too and heresies, prevail everywhere, it is plain that the Church of God needs to be lawfully reformed."

[2] Cassander, Art. 25. "Would that those persons, who ought to undertake this reformation, were not themselves the authors of those superstitions, or, at least, would cease to foster them in the minds of the simple for the sake of gain!"

body of God's people in the Wilderness, when called and assembled together upon their common occasions, as the name denotes

Εκκλησία, or Συναγωγὴ.

After which time such as resorted to the same government have been so named, and the body of the Christians or new Israel succeeding God's ancient people, succeeded to the name, signified by our Blessed Lord, when He says, "Upon this rock I build my Church,"[1] meaning by it all who bear His name; and so, "Tell it to the Church," that is, to that part of the Church, to which the person can resort most conveniently, since it is not possible he should do it to the whole. They are one religion in point of right, however unhappily divided in point of fact by their own fault. For doubtless the Holy Apostles so founded the churches of their planting, that they might befit the constitution of one whole Universal Church.

In short, the Church is the corporation or body of all those who profess to believe in Jesus Christ to be the true Messiah and Redeemer of the world, albeit this body be divided into never so many sects; but among which there are remaining a considerable part of true and faithful persons, professing in general the same faith, and participating of the same Sacraments, under the ministry of lawful pastors, with that body of believers. I say, however, dispersed and distracted through the world, so that every individual single person, professing the Christian faith, is a member of that

[1] Matt. xvi., 18; xviii., 17.

particular church he lives in, and all those particular churches are members of the Catholic or Universal Church.

Thus, all those baptized persons constituted that first Christian Church, converted by St. Peter and other of the Apostles, and in like manner all other Assemblies, so coming in and united by aggregation, and continuing steadfast in their doctrine and fellowship, that is, of sacraments and prayer, as builded and founded on the same rock, Christ Jesus, though in several apartments like a house standing on the same basis, covered and protected under the same roof.[1] This structure did our Blessed Saviour qualify all His Apostles to raise, as being endued with the like power and authority, (as St. Cyprian[2] tells us, speaking of the origination of the Church only, not at all of the succession.) So St. Peter indeed had the honour to convert the first Christians, to demonstrate the unity of that which was to be superstructed on. And this church, so founded, is to continue in actual being to the consummation of the world; and is, therefore, to receive a constant and perpetual accession, from time to time, till that appointed period. This, as an object of faith, we believe, because it is grounded on God's promise. Not that many particular churches may not fall away, and their candlesticks be removed, but not to an universal defection, or to perish at once. For so again our Blessed Lord: *Lo! I am with you to the end of the world:*[3] And *where two*

[1] Ephes., ii., 19, 20.

[2] De Unitate Eccles.

[3] Matt., xxviii., 20.

or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.[1]

Thus, as this church must be a holy and pure church, so will it always be visible, if not generally, yet in some particulars. The Greek Church has ever taught the foundation through all the changes, confusions, and interruptions it has suffered. It is true, it may sometimes be clouded, as a castle upon the most eminent mountain, by a transient mist, when yet the fabric remains as conspicuous as to its solidity and capacity of being a visible object, as to matter and form, as in the most serene weather. There was even in the Church of Rome still the matter, but not the form, of a visible church. Now, it is not the matter, but the form (we know) that gives the *esse* and being to things. The persons are the matter who compose the Church, and they indeed are visible; but it is not that which gives the denomination, without the other. Now, all who profess the Christian religion may be called the matter, and yet be exceedingly wide from being a true church. When the form is visible, it is then, and then only, the true church will be so too. Now, the form consists in faith, godliness, sanctity, and things which do not (of their natures) so evidently appear and make external and pharisaical shows to the eyes of the world, because they are graces hidden in the hearts of believers, and fall not so properly under the criterion of sense.

The external vocation is, indeed, common to all, and the means that God employs, to render her a church,

[1] Matt., xviii., 20.

are sufficiently manifest; but to know whether this or that individual be the true Church, is not discernible by the corporal sight of externals, but by the life and doctrine of its professors. It is not visible as affected to a certain place or city only, as we may see by the description of the Church at Ephesus in the Revelation of St. John,[1] how God dealt with her and with six famous churches more, though founded by the very Apostles themselves. In like sort, we may read how St. Paul menaces the Romans, if they persist not in the faith and abide in the truth, namely, that they shall be exscinded and cut off as unfruitful and unprofitable branches.[2] And therefore their own great Ribera[3] pronounces, that in the end or latter day she shall revolt from the faith once delivered to her, as in effect those prodigious errors both in the present doctrine and worship have already almost totally obscured her pristine beauty. She has indeed a name, *Vox et præterea nihil*, a show without a substance, or, if a substance, foully overgrown with moss, briars, and noisome weeds.

A Church may possibly be, and often is, obscured for a time, when persecution rises by means of the Word. For, where was it visible, when Elias made his sad complaint, after the Ten Tribes had revolted to Baal?[4] or, when Manasseh built up the high places, committing such unheard-of abominations? Where, when they were all in captivity at Babylon, and led away before by Salmanezer? Where, when under the cruelty of

[1] Rev., ii., 1-7.
[2] Rom., xi., 24.
[3] In Apoc., c. 14.
[4] I. Kings, xix., 10.

Antiochus? and all their many dispersions?[1] Nay, where shall be the Christian Church, when all the inhabitants of the earth shall adore the Beast and his image? When was it visible, when almost all were Arians?[2] And Bellarmine[3] himself is forced to confess, that near the time of *Antichrist*, the Church shall suffer under so great persecution, driven to abscond, as hardly to be found in the whole world.

Those who agree in the Christian symbols, believe this invisible to bodily eyes; and Almighty God imparts His Grace in this life, but glory in that to come. Were the Christian Church entirely visible, what needed she to be taught to say in her Creeds, she believes the Holy Catholic Church, and not rather, that she sees it visibly, whilst it is now more an object of faith than of sight; (and so walk by faith, not by sight) for, whilst we believe, we do not see, and when once we begin to see, we shall cease to believe, because there will be no need of it.

From the year 378 to 1428, had the true Christian Church been so miserably clouded, that few, very few could discover where she was, but in the grotts and crypts, such as the *antelucani cœtus*;[4] so that, if visibility be joined with perpetual eminence, the Christian Church has been oft, in a manner, invisible, yet existing in some part or place, in some persons, nay, in

[1] See St. Augustine, Epist. 80.

[2] See St. Athanasius's Epist. ad Sol.

[3] De Roman. Pontif., l. 3, c. 7.

[4] See Arnob. Hexam., l. 4, c. 18.

whole countries, as Berengarius and his disciples in the eleventh century, the Albigenses, the Vaudois, the poor men of Lyons, the Taborists in Bohemia, and others in the succeeding one, and so to Luther, down to our days.

The Church has had its champions and assertors in all ages and times, and is still the same, in respect of internal substance; though eclipsed, many times, of its outward splendour, she may be under shade, not extinguished, no more than the glorious sun under a cloud; so neither can the whole body of the Church be now quite hidden, though the particular members may.

2. CATHOLIC.

Next as to the *Catholic* adjunct—*Christianus mihi nomen, Catholicus cognomen*[1]—"the true Christian, the true *Catholic*," was the old answer; but, as for the term itself, of which some so highly vaunt, it is not so essential, as if the very name made it what it should be. Nor is it more a mark of the true Church, than as it agrees in doctrine; nor find we it in all the Scriptures, nor was it ancient in the Church itself, or so much as in her *symbols*, till after the time of the Apostles, and then only to distinguish the orthodox from the heretics who disturbed her, and affected to be called *Catholic*, as an adulterous Jerusalem would be called the Holy City,[2] upon which occasion it was in frequent use

[1] Pacian, in Bibl. Patr.

[2] St. Augustine, Epist. 48; and Lactantius, Instit., l. v., c. ultim.

amongst the Fathers; some, indeed, of the Apostolic writings and epistles were directed to the Universal or Catholic Church, and others to particular churches. But we are not to look upon it as a part of Scripture, because it formed part of the titles.

The ancient Catholic Church was frequently taken for an ordinary parochial assembly, where all the parish met; and sometimes were particular persons so named, in opposition to heretics and schismatics. And, though these were not properly Catholics, in respect of singularity, yet, in respect of unity with all the rest, they were; and were so called, to signify the whole. And most apparent it is from all the ancients, St. Cyprian, Clemens Alexandrinus, St. Cyril, Isidorus, Prosper, and abundantly in St. Augustine, that by the Catholic Church was only meant the Faithful, and not any other body, or external, pompous, and eminently visible church. In his Treatise on St. John, we shall find it to consist in the assembly of the body of Christ; namely, Saints predestinated, called, justified, glorified; and so was taken by St. Bernard, till the twelfth age; and after, not for the *professors* of the Christian religion, but the Faithful and Holy in it. Wicked men, indeed, may equivocally be said to be of the Church, as ill humours, of the body,[1] and should be cast out, because, though in it, they are no part of it: so our bodies may have a dead and useless member, in which there is no life or vigour.

These things being so, if communion with the Church

[1] St. Augustine, Tract 3, in I. Epist. Joh.

of Rome be only to be in communion of the Catholic Church, as they pretend, (but which, indeed, is false and contradictory in the very term, *Rome* being but a particular Church) what became of all the Asian Churches, the provinces of Cilicia, Mesopotamia, and the rest, for one hundred and fifty years nearly, upon the difference of celebrating Easter? What, of a great part of the Oriental Church, separating from the Roman communion in the sixth century, in the Fifth General Council, against that of Chalcedon? What, of the Churches of Africa, excommunicating Pope Vigilius? What, of several others? Wherefore, evident it is, that every Church's centre of communion was the Holy Man, Bishop and Archbishop appointed head of that diocese or province: thus was Rome head of ten provinces; Milan, of seven; Alexandria, of that of Egypt, Lybia, and Pentopolis; Antioch, of the East; Carthage, of Africa; and so of the rest.

Wherefore, Gregory Nazianzen,[1] writing to the clergy of Cesarea, calls her the Mother of all Churches, and says as much of it, as any can of Rome. This city, the presidence and chief residence of the Imperial Court, where all the grand affairs of that vast dominion were transacted, made it more conspicuous; but, when all this was translated to Constantinople, we see how Rome declined, even as to its former esteem; that rival Bishop, challenging equal, if not superior, privileges; and accordingly does Nazianzen[2] name it the very Eye of the Universe, as deriving its dignity from the fountain of

[1] Epist. 22. [2] Orat. 32.

the Faith; and, doubtless, the centre of communion was the same in all the Apostolic Churches, wherever planted. Whence that of Tertullian, that all who are in the same belief with those Churches, though founded long after, (meaning the five Patriarchal), are of the same Church; so that, when any great and important affair required it, a Council, consisting of all these, was sufficient, without the decision of that of Rome; which, had it been the only centre, we should have many times heard from the best records. But we are, in the mean time, sufficiently satisfied, that the most genuine term is that Church which (as we said) comprehends all persons, dogmas, sexes, ages, and countries, that profess and embrace all the necessary saving truths. And, in this respect, none, who are not of it, can be safe, because he is of no true Church. To depart, then, from such a Church, is highly dangerous; but to reform from it, is highly necessary.

But, to conclude, and draw some inference from all that has been said, as it concerns the title of this Chapter, and especially the Church of England; it is to be considered, that the choice of religion is not a problematical thing; but a certain and real profession, established upon solid and undeniable truths, stripped and divested of all false colours and pretences, novelties and additions, whatsoever. And, therefore, as we have shown the danger and unreasonableness of being of no religion, in this Treatise, either out of direct Atheism, or the fear of being in a false one; so how unsafe it is to be indifferent in our choice, even of the

Christian religion, be the persons professing it ever so learned and zealous. True faith requires more than a good intention; for, unless our principles be right, and the foundation firm, we shall fall into errors and superstition; and he who runs in a wrong path, the more speed he makes, the farther he deviates, and comes short of what he seeks.

There is a great cry made by some for catalogues of fundamentals, but without any cause or necessity; since it is sufficient for any man's salvation, that he assents to the truth of Holy Scripture, carefully endeavouring to understand its meaning, so far as concerns his duty, and to direct his life accordingly. Wherefore, he whose conscience tells him he does so, needs not fear. In the mean time, if needs they will require such a list, let them repair to the doctrines which they find plainly revealed, and such as, according to the various capacities of men's knowledge, become fundamental to them, that is, necessary to be known; for so some may be to them, which are not such to others.

SECTION II.

FUNDAMENTAL DOCTRINES, OR CREED.

And now, whilst the Romanists call out so loudly for fundamentals, they are themselves forced to distinguish them, as what are essential and universal points, what are other; and are as much concerned as any to know what they are, and produce a catalogue, as any at

whom they clamour; as if God and the Holy Scripture, and even Nature herself, had not afforded light sufficient for a virtuous life. But, since our Blessed Saviour has determined who shall be admitted into His religion, in the Baptismal Covenant,[1] and the Church accepted the Creeds to be the matter of our Christian Profession, we shall need to go no further. Nor does the Church of England require her sons to subscribe to her Articles, as other fundamentals, than as instruments of peace; indulging a modest liberty of interpreting them, and not obtruding them as essential of saving faith, as the pure Word of God in Scripture is; but as pious opinions, fitted for the preservation of Christian unity. As to the rest, she judges that the safest standard, by which to establish and examine any point of doctrine, is to consider which of the opposites most tends to the advancement of real sanctity, and to make choice of that. In the mean time, she endeavours to follow and embrace that which is most consonant to the Word of God, and the most constant belief and practice of the purest and most ancient times; and takes this for demonstration, that nothing can be necessary to be believed, under pain of damnation, save such propositions, of which it is evident that God has declared and taught them to us, and of which it is also as certain, that this is the true and genuine sense and purport of it.

This Faith, then, which the Reformed Church of England does profess, without judging or determining the true Church by what she is called, but by what she

[1] Matt., xxviii., 19, 20.

believes and teaches,[1] is plainly set down in the *Symbol*, commonly called the *Apostles' Creed*, as what the Christian Church of most denominations has constantly professed to believe and teach. Nor yet that the words and syllables of it do contain whatever is necessary to salvation; but because the Creed is not the bare words of the Creed, but the sense and meaning of them, together with that coherence and dependence of the parts, which the reasons and grounds of them infer. Upon this ground, then, the Christian religion, reformed from its corruptions, and restored to primitive purity,

I. 1. Believes in God, since there can be no Divine Faith (as well as no Christian) without believing a God. For faith is, therefore, divine, because it dependeth upon the authority of God giving testimony to its object, and that which has no being can have no authority.

2. That God is one Almighty, Omniscient, Eternal; Creator of the Universe, and of all that it contains.

3. That in the Unity of this Godhead there is a *Trinity* of persons, *Father, Son,* and *Holy Ghost.*

II. That God the Son is the Word, begotten of the Father from all eternity, of one eternal substance with the Father, who descended from Heaven, for our salva-

1 Unius et ejusdem opinionis (mirum videri potest) judicamus auctores Catholicos, et sequaces hæreticos; excusamus magistros, et condemnamus scholasticos: qui scripserunt libros, sunt hæredes cœli; quorum librorum defensores detrahuntur ad infernum.—Vin. Lirinens. in St. Cyprian's case.

tion; assuming the human nature, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, from a pure virgin;[1] so that the whole Godhead and manhood are individually united in one nature for ever.[2]

III. 1. That in this human nature thus dignified, He, after a holy and excellent life, made a pure and unspotted offering of Himself upon the Cross; by that His death and sacrifice to appease the wrath and satisfy the justice of the Father, for the sins of the world, and reconcile mankind to God, and purchase his salvation.[3]

2. That Christ, after the death of His body, was buried, descended into Hell (personally, or virtually and powerfully).[4]

3. That the third day He rose again, from the dead,[5] in the same perfect nature of God-man; in which person, after forty days conversing with His disciples, opening their understanding to the Scriptures, qualifying them to teach and convert all nations to His new and holy religion, by supernatural gifts and power to work miracles, He ascended up into Heaven in their sight; where He is to remain, in a glorified state, at the right hand of God the Father—that is, in the most resplendent majesty, interceding for us by the merits of His obedience,

[1] I John, i., 2; i. 14; xvi., 28, 29.

[2] Luke, i. 33, 34; I. Tim., ii., 5.

[3] I. Pet., iii., 18; Rom., v., 9; Matt., xxvii., 50; Mark, xv., 44, 45; Luke, xxiii., 46.

[4] I. Pet., iii., 19.

[5] Matt., xxviii., 19; Mark, xv.; Luke, xxiv., 1; Acts, i., 9; Heb., i., 6.

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4. Until His return to judge the world in righteousness at the last day.[1]

5. That the Holy Ghost is God, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of one substance, equality, glory, and eternity with Both.

6. That He is our Intercessor, on earth, to the Father and Son, our Sanctifier for the work of grace in our hearts, our *Paraclete* and Comforter during the absence of the Son, our Advocate in Heaven; the Inspirer of the Prophets and Apostles, by whom God spake to, and directs, His Church.[2]

IV. That in this Trinity none is afore and after another, none greater or less; but that the entire Three Persons be co-equal and co-eternal.[3]

V. That the Holy Scriptures, so inspired and dictated, are the very Oracles of God, of undoubted authority, (as has already been proved),[4] completely furnished with laws and precepts, sufficient to direct us into all necessary truth, and communicating to us the whole counsel of God importing our salvation; and is, therefore, the Infallible Rule of Faith; and, as delivered to us by and from the Prophets and Apostles, are now to have no more either added to or detracted from them, though an Angel from Heaven should teach otherwise.[5] In the mean while, we are to understand,

[1] I. Thess., iv., 16; Acts, x., 42; II. Tim., iv., 1; I. Pet., iv. 5.

[2] S. John, xiv., 26; xv., 26; xvi., 7-13.

[3] Ibid., x., 30; II. Cor., xiii., 14.

[4] Vol. i., chap. vii.

[5] Deut., iv., 1; Gal., i., 8; iii., 15; Rev., xxii., 18, 19. The Books or Scriptures, thus divinely penned and delivered to the Church, have been given before in Vol. i., chap. vii.

that the authority of this Word of God is, in [point of] time, previous to and before the Church.[1]

VI. 1. That there is a Catholic or Universal Church; that is, a congregation of faithful persons, professing this holy religion, which has faculty and power to judge and determine points of faith[2]—so that nothing be repugnant to the Scriptures, but according to the analogy of the Faith; and has also right to ordain such decent rites and ceremonies, as make for edification and good order; provided they be not contrary to the same Word of God, whereof she is the depository.[3]

2. That this Church, called also the Flock,[4] or Spouse of Christ her Head, denoting unity of faith, is militant here on earth, as in continual hostility against the world, the flesh, and the Devil, and not as slaves to them, as the wicked are; and she shall, in time hereafter, be triumphant with Christ in Heaven.

3. That this Church is but one body, though consisting of many members and particular Churches,[5] and yet is not its unity wholly in the form of government or ceremonies, but in its doctrine limited to certain Articles, Creeds, and other symbols agreeable thereto, without receiving or admitting any new ones whatsoever. Thus in the true Church there is unity of faith, unity of worship, and unity of head; which is Christ alone.

[1] I. Pet., i., 23.

[2] Matt., xvi., 18; Ephes., ii., 21; II. Tim., iii., 10.

[3] I. Cor., xi., 23, 24, 25; Rom., xii., 6; Tit., i. 9.

[4] John, x., 27.

[5] Rom., xii., 15; I. Cor., xii., 12, 13, 14.

4. That she is visible, though often clouded by persecution, and driven into the Wilderness, for a while and in part; nor can she perish, but continues in actual being, and so shall remain to the end of the world.[1]

5. That she is Catholic, that is, Orthodox and Apostolical, professing the same faith, of all nations, sexes, ages,[2] without dependence on any certain earthly seat or head, save Christ alone; nor, being diffusive, can she err in fundamentals, nor can all its members totally apostatize, though particulars may.

VII. 1. That there is a Communion of Saints,[3] that is, of all holy men and women, living members of the same body or head, with the saints departed; death, which separates souls and bodies, separating none from the mystical union and communion in Christ. And this communion consists in a society of the same hope, estimation, emulation, imitation on our parts, and of desire and mutual supplication on theirs; blessing and praising God for the holy and worthy examples both of the living and departed; honouring their memory, and enlarging our bowels of charity to each other.

2. That there is a remission and pardon of sins through the merits and for the sake of Jesus Christ, remitting the original stains to us in baptism, upon true and sincere repentance, according to the tenor of the Gospel.[4]

[1] Acts, x., 35; Matt., xxviii., 19, 20.
[2] Coloss., i., 18; John, x., 16; Mark, viii., 15.
[3] Coloss., ii., 19; Hebr., xii., 22, 23.
[4] Luke, xxiv., 47; Acts, ii., 38; Rom., vi., 2, 7; Acts, xxii., 16.

3. That there is a resurrection of the flesh or body, (as our English Creed expresses it) when Christ shall come to judge the quick and the dead, whose kingdom shall have no end.[1]

4. That there is a life everlasting, after this bodily death and resurrection, to the saints immediately, body and soul re-united, when the saints shall come into the world of spirits, and be endued like them with like bodies.[2]

5. That there will be then a reward of eternal bliss and happiness to the righteous, and eternal misery and pains inflicted on the ungodly and wicked on that terrible day.[3]

This is the true Catholic Christian faith, which has been received and taught by Christ, and His Apostles and successors, and confirmed by miracles, signs, and wonders, and so delivered to us from age to age by universal and indefectible tradition; and in which we of the Church of England agree both with the Papists, Calvinists, Lutherans, and other reformed and evangelical Churches, as appears by all their symbols and confessions. And as to other matters of doctrine and discipline, she, the Church of England, reforming from the corruptions of other Churches, farther teaches and holds what is contained in those Articles, maturely agreed upon in the year 1562, and what may by good and just consequence be derived from them.

[1] I. Thess., iv., 16; Luke, i., 33; Rev., xi., 15.

[2] Dan., xii., 2; Exod., vi., 8; I. Cor., xv.

[3] II. Cor., v. 1; I. Pet., v. 18; Heb., v. 9.

SECTION III. TENETS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

PART I.—1. ORIGINAL SIN.

That through the corruptions of man's nature he is stained and sadly weakened by Original Sin,[1] derived from Adam's fatal and wilful lapse, so that concupiscence itself is sin even in the unregenerate; and that man is void of original righteousness, continually inclined to sin, and subjected thereby to the curse, unless taken off by Christ through faith and baptism.

There are yet other pious divines, even of the same Church, who think it not so much guilt in us as in Adam; there being, indeed, no office of prayer extant, to pray against it; but that we deprecate its wretched consequence; concupiscence being the vice and obliquity of our nature, not her sin. But so it is that, since this lamentable bruise, the condition of man is such, that he, of his own strength, is not able to perform any acceptable work or service without the assistance of God's preventing, concomitant grace, and spiritual regeneration in Christ working in him both to will and to do.[2] But this grace, in the mean time, is not a third substance different from soul and body, (as some imagine) but a distinct principle put into us by Almighty God, without which we cannot operate. Nor yet does this necessity of grace suppose our nature originally

[1] Rom., v., 12, 16; v. ii., 25; James, i., 14; I. Pet., ii., 11; Coloss., iii., 5; Gen., vi., 5.

[2] Rom., viii., 7, 8; I. Cor., ii., 14; II. Cor., iii., 5; John, xv., 5; Phil. ii., 13.

corrupted; since beyond Adam's mere nature something else was requisite both in him and all his offspring [to preserve original purity].

2. FREE-WILL.

As to liberty of will since the Fall,[1] some of our divines will not allow it; others, that it still remains, and is no consequent of original sin; fearing that the contrary opinion should take away both reward, punishment, and even the immortality of the soul itself; and therefore piously hold that, whenever sin prevails, it is not so much through want of ability and power, as of making use of that power, and that we may do all that God requires of us, if we do all we can.

3. JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH.

The Reformed Church of England holds, that man is justified only by the merits of Jesus Christ, for whose sake he is accepted as righteous before God the Father, and that through faith, and not for or yet without works; not as the cause, but fruits and marks of his faith and its sincerity;[2] so that even the best works, before justification, do not please God, nor merit grace *ex condigno;* but still retain the nature of sin. The Catholic Church, therefore, utterly rejects works of pretended supererogation; seeing that, when we have done all we are enjoined, we are but unprofitable servants.[3]

[1] John, i., 13; Rom., iii., 24; I. Cor., vi., 19; I. Cor., i., 30.

[2] Ephes., ii., 8, 9; Rom., iv., 5; I. Cor. i., 30; Heb., xi., 6; Rom., viii., 23; Gal. v. 17.

[3] Luke, xvii., 10.

4. CHRIST ALONE OUR PROPITIATION.

The true Catholic Church holds, that since Christ was made man in all things like unto us,[1] (sin only excepted) He alone is and was without blemish, by virtue of which He was that acceptable sacrifice, that Lamb of God, which takes away the sins of the world; and none else, though baptized and regenerate, can propitiate for us; for in many things we offend all.

5. OF SIN AFTER BAPTISM.

The True Church holds that, though the least sin be in itself worthy of damnation, yet the most heinous sinners are pardonable even after Baptism and receiving of the Holy Ghost; a regenerate man may, through infirmity, yea, and that wilfully, sin; and, by the infinite mercies of a gracious God, repent and obtain pardon; except he sin maliciously and spitefully against that Blessed Spirit; so that every mortal sin, after illumination, is not that mortal sin.[2]

Sins do yet exceedingly differ: some are not of so deep a stain as others; namely, such as we fall into through infirmity, surprise, natural imperfection, evil inclinations and *quotidianæ incursionis*, not consented to or delighted in. So that, if we strive against them sincerely and vigorously, God will pity our imperfection, whilst the very smallest sin, if observed, ceases any longer to be an infirmity. Wherefore, not the first

[1] John, i., 14, 29; I. Pet., ii., 22; Heb., ii., 17, 18.

[2] I. John, v., 16, 17; Matt., xiii., 31; Luke, xii., 10.

motion of the sensual appetite is sin, but it is the actual deliberation and inordinate desire which makes it so.

Sins before Illumination (that is, Baptism) are pardoned in Baptism; sins after, must be re-sprinkled, that is, purged by repentance and the baptism of penitential tears, and a contrite heart. Yet, not the shedding of tears for sin, but our utterly forsaking sin, procures remission.[1] He who is *attrite* leaves his sin; but he who is contrite obtains the pardon.

This irremissible sin is a malicious, spiteful, propensely wilful apostacy, for which there was no sacrifice or atonement in the Law; nor, indeed, was there for any wilful sin whatever, though without those aggravating circumstances; but such were left to the mercy of God's extraordinary grace. For, had there been a sacrifice capable of propitiating for it, David, after his murder and adultery, would have given enough; such being reserved for the High Priest's presenting Christ in the Sanctuary, into which he entered but once a-year. Wherefore, when it is said—Sacrifice and meat-offerings thou wouldst not have; but a body Thou hast made me—it has recourse to the Incarnation of the Son of God.—Lo! I come; in the Volume of thy Book it is written of me, that I should fulfil Thy will.[2] And this He did for all those sins, unpardonable under the Law; no sacrifice being found sufficient to expiate such, till Christ entered into the Holiest, not with the blood of bulls and goats, but His own, which there, that is, in Heaven, intercedes for the greatest offenders. His

[1] II. Cor., ii., 7. [2] Heb., x., 5, 9.

blood, that is, the merits of His suffering and obedience, procures pardon for all, but such as obstinately and finally go on in sin. Speaking a word against the Holy Ghost signifies a contumacious acting against Him, as did Corah and his company; for that even this high offence is otherwise remissible appears in the *Pharisees*, to whom yet our Blessed Lord afforded miracles, preaching, and admonition, without the least effect upon their malicious obstinacy; so Pharaoh, and some of the Jews both in and after our Saviour's time, resisted His holy motions, persevering in their malicious acting, against clear conviction. Now, though all wilful sin, growing into habit, so not persisted in till death, be not this deadly sin, it is a most dangerous step towards it. This, then, is some consolation, that he who is sorry for his sin has not committed that sin.

PART II.

1. CONFESSION.

The Reformed Catholic holds, that confession is a duty to God—not *auricular* to a priest only, as a sacrament necessary to salvation, (as being without element to make it so), and grounds her opinion on the Apostles,[1] who have prescribed self-examination and confession of injuries one to another, not to the priest as indispensable, not in common, not theatrically, (says St. Chrysostom), but to such as we have wronged and offended. Sins committed against God are to be con-

[1] II. Cor., xiii., 5; Jam., v., 16.

fessed to God only; scandalous and notorious sins, to the Church; and, in case of an unquiet, doubtful, and unsatisfied conscience, to some skilful, learned divine (versed in cases) for advice and comfort, and absolution —nor yet as effecting any thing by virtue of the words or form, but as declaring pardon to the truly penitent, because already pardoned, if penitent. Nor this as of absolute necessity, but as of great use to burdened and afflicted consciences; and, as we said, for direction, resolution, caution, restraint: to cure the wounded, erect the depressed, humble the sinner, and restore his peace. But those only are obliged to seek it as are noted by the Church for public and scandalous offences. The Apostles only had the power extraordinary of binding and loosing; but the faculty (as in them) was not to descend upon others to perpetuity, but for a season. Secret sins against God, to God are to be revealed in secret; and public offences openly to the Church; and if to the priest, as in those cases, without naming persons, or the circumstances, if immodest.

2. PREDESTINATION.

The Reformed Christian holds, that *Predestination*[1] to eternal life was from eternity; since He who created man must needs know what will happen to man; and that whoever is saved, him has God fore-ordained should be so; for those whom he foreknew would take

[1] Luke, xii., 32; John, vi., 37; Rom., viii., 29, 30; Ephes., i., 3, 4; II. Tim., i. 9; John, x., 28, 29; Rom., ix., 15; I. Thess., ii., 12; Matt., xxv., 24.

hold of grace, and obey, He predestinated to conform: and those He after calls; and whom He calls, He justifies, (making them His adopted sons) and whom He justifies, He saves and glorifies.

In the mean time, as to further intuition into these recondite mysteries, we are to limit our curiosity by that which is set bounds to by revelation. If God foresees the future, He has necessarily foreseen and established the event. There is, then, a distinguishing grace, by which some are absolutely elected, and by virtue thereof absolutely saved, by such potent and infallible means as are prepared for them; whilst others, not of that number, are not totally reprobated; all having sufficient means and grace afforded and offered to them, if they will make use of it. So that none miscarry, unless they willingly refuse to co-operate with this grace, according to the talents received. In the mean time, such as have been in an extraordinary manner wrought on, and, as it were, irresistibly excited to holiness, have reason to believe they are absolutely elected, so long as they persist and continue in that pious course, but, as for certainty, there is little save those hopeful signs. Whilst that more rigid doctrine of absolute Decrees is apt to beget and suggest unworthy thoughts of a most Gracious God, as Author, first of sin, and then of damning for it, to the encouraging of profaneness and hurrying to despair; destroying all industry and love to the most loving and most indulgent Father, who is not an implacable but a gentle Master, full of mercy, patience, unspotted justice; and what-

ever is amiable in the best of men, is supereminently so in Him.

But concerning these profound and astonishing depths, such as are also Original Guilt, Grace, Free-will, &c., the Holy Scriptures are to be searched with humble prayer, where we shall find sufficient concerning their being truths, though not to our comprehension of their manner. And we are not obliged to bring all that concerns our salvation to the test and criterion of human science and the schools of Plato and Aristotle, of which they are incapable; but with a humble faith adore what we cannot fathom.

As to our own particular, then: when one considers how and why God has abandoned so many millions of Pagans and miserable Infidels, (than which there seems nothing more incomprehensible in all His conduct) that it should please God to think of one distinctly amongst that vast multitude in this corner of the universe, in this atheistical conjuncture, in this point of eternity—this, when a man seriously contemplates, one becomes in one's own eyes as nothing; one is ravished with humble admiration. Alas! alas! we poor worms, finite frail creatures, made up of dust, and resolvable into dust, see not, know not that infinite succession of objects, which are continually before the Sovereign Intelligencer, nor the series and chains which this age has with the ages and world to come; nor the place which these people (whose lot and ignorance we so deplore) have in this concatenation; nor the right of God's justice and dispensation concerning them. We

consider not that a thousand years are to Him but as a day, &c.; that one nation is as a hundred nations, and a hundred but as one to God, who is able to draw infinite out of nothing, as we ourselves are produced.

Let us, therefore, not be high-minded, but fear, and not look for new lights so near, or this Infinite Splendour, as to be confounded with its Glory; but rather, with our Blessed Lord, say, "Father, I thank Thee, that Thou hast not revealed these things to the wise, but to babes; even so, because it is Thy pleasure." Where is, then, the wise? where is the disputer of this world?

3. COUNCILS.

The true Christian Religion holds that, though kings and supreme magistrates have the only right to assemble General Councils, for the vindicating of truth, condemning and reforming errors and corruptions in the churches under their dominion, and that they are to be highly reverenced, and their Decrees and Canons to be obeyed, yet she also holds that they may err, and *have* grossly erred, when they decree things which are not agreeable to the Word of God. So that notoriously have not only the second Council of Nice, but many others since, especially the late Synod of Trent, though she embrace the first four General Councils, and will stand by their Decrees and Constitutions.

The same Holy Christian Church admits of none to the ministerial function but such as are lawfully called and ordained by such as have public character and Divine authority so to do.[1]

[1] Ephes., iv., 11; I. Tim., iv., 14; v., 22.

The Christian Church holds that the church offices of prayer and sacraments ought to be in the vulgar and commonly understood tongue, and thinks nothing is more plainly set down and recommended in all the Holy Scriptures—proposes the Lord's Prayer for a perfect pattern, and the whole moral law for practice.[1]

4. SACRAMENTS.

The Holy Church of Christ holds but two Evangelical Sacraments were ordained by the Lord Jesus, as necessary to salvation, and marks of her profession, where they can be had, viz., Baptism and the Supper of the Lord, as having only these visible signs and symbols annexed to them, ordained by God. Other Sacraments, improperly so called, are not necessary, as being not (like these) of virtue to strengthen our faith and charity, nor bear they so near relation to the grace and benefits received from their institution, as the washing away and cleansing of sins, and nourishing the faithful with the mystical participation of the body and blood of Christ; whereby the worthy recipient has title to all the effects of His meritorious passion and obedience as a pledge of everlasting life.[2]

She also holds, that the unworthiness of the minister officiating does not evacuate or hinder the efficacy of the Sacraments, to those who are duly prepared to receive them.[3]

The Sacred Christian Church holds, that Baptism[4] is not only a sign of our profession and mark of distinction

[1] I. Cor., xiv., 6, 9, 14, 17, 26. [2] Acts, ii., 38; I. Cor., xi., 24.
[3] Matt., xxiii., 1; Phil., i., 15; I. Cor., iii., 7.
[4] See Appendix A.

from Infidels, but also of regeneration and reception into the Church, whereby the promises of remission of sins and adoption are visibly sealed by the Holy Ghost, confirming grace and faith, by the prayers and offices of the Church; and that *infant-baptism* is most agreeable to our Blessed Saviour's institution. Wherefore, she believes and holds, that Baptism has influence on all the periods of our life, and to be renewed and actually applied by the Holy Eucharist, if our repentance be timely and sincere.[1]

The Holy Christian Church holds, that, though Confirmation be no Sacrament, as using no visible element, according to that of St. Augustine; *Accedat verbum ad Elementum, et fit Sacramentum;* yet that it is an excellent part of Christian discipline, by which children, coming to years of discretion, are examined and taught what they are enjoined now to perform of themselves; and that it is a suppletory to early Baptism, and a corroboration of its graces, rightly made use of.

The Church of Christ, truly reformed, holds, that the Supper of the Lord[2] is a Sacrament of our Redemption by the death and passion of Christ upon the cross, of which only the faithful, prepared, do receive the benefit. That the elements are made sacramental by consecration, fraction, and distribution, and thereby convey the real body and blood of Christ after a heavenly, spiritual,

[1] Matt., xxviii., 17, 20; Rom., vi., 3; I. Cor., vi., 19; Tit., iii., 5; I. Cor., xii., 13; Mark, xvi., 16; Acts, ii., 14-42.

[2] I. Cor., x., 16, 17; Matt. xxvi., 29; Luke, xxii., 19, 20; Mark, xiv., 22.; I. Cor., xl., 23-34.

and mysterious manner, but without any transubstantiation or change of the species, and therefore in no wise to be worshipped. That they seal to, and possess us of, an interest in all that Christ has, by his suffering and obedience, promerited for us.

She holds, that both the wine, as well as the bread, ought to be received of all the communicants, laymen as well as priests, by Divine and indispensable institution.

She holds, that the sacrifice of Christ upon the cross, once offered, was a full, perfect, and complete oblation, propitiatory and satisfactory, for the sins of all the world; and therefore needs no bloody repetition, or suppletory for quick and dead, as Papists pretend in their superstitious masses.[1]

She holds that, after the words of consecration and efficacy of benediction of the elements, the symbols become changed into the body and blood of Christ, after a sacramental, spiritual, and consequently real manner; and that all worthy communicants receive Christ to all the real purposes and effects of His Passion, instrumentally conveying its influence and operation; bread in natural substance; Christ in sacramental. Nor are the symbols more really given than really received; and so, as really, nourish the soul, as the elements do the body; the first substance being changed by grace, though remaining the same in nature; nor barely as bread and wine, naked figures, and figures

[1] Acts, xx., 28; Rom., v., 6-9; Gal., iii., 13; I. Cor., vi., 20; Acts, x., 43; Heb., ix., 12-22.

only; but such as exhibit Christ himself, and puts the worthy recipient into sure possession of Him, sealing and giving him federal right and title to all His promises and promerits. Wherefore Holy Church holds a *real presence;* (and so the Canon of the Church of England, *really and indeed*); and no understanding person of her communion denies it; since a thing is not one jot less *real* for being spiritual; and thus are the gifts and graces of God's Holy Spirit real and sensible graces, and not things ambiguous or unintelligible to those who are not altogether immersed in gross and material objects, which have no place in this sacred mystery.

The Christian Catholic and Orthodox Faith affirms a real change, retaining the ancient and middle belief; but presumes not to determine the *mode* or manner, because no where revealed, nor any ways appearing; besides that, she has the possession of above twelve hundred years, from our Saviour's institution, to the contrary; exploding the gross and corporeal change, as now imposed by the Church of Rome.

The Holy Church adores not the elements; but holds, that the sacred elements, so set apart and consecrated, are an homage and (as may be said) an act of adoration; and the Church of England receives it in that humble gesture. Forasmuch as Christ is thus present in an extraordinary and mysterious manner, and with so great advantages. But this, her adoration, is to her Lord Christ alone, at the right hand of the Father, adoring His flesh and blood in the mystery and

venerable usage of the symbols, which represent and impart Him to the soul of the worthy communicant.

The Church of Christ, truly reformed, as to oblation in the Holy Sacrament, affirms, with the ancients, that it signifies only, *Oblatum celebrare, et memoriâ revocare*; or, as St. Chrysostom calls it, Ἀναμνήσιν; and that if Christ were really offered, He must as often be put to death; whilst the Apostle tells us plainly, He was but *once* offered;[1] so that, if sacrificed in a natural sense, when first instituted, it could not be propitiatory; seeing, then, His Father must have been reconciled before His Passion. Wherefore, the Church of England holds it *representative* and *memorative* only of that which was after to be done, and now of what has actually been done. And she also holds it to be a sacrifice both propitiatory and impetratory; because (as Mr. Thorndike well observes) the oblation of it to Almighty God, with and by the prayers and praises of the Church, does render God propitious, by obtaining those benefits which the death and Passion of Christ do represent. And, therefore, in her offices for the Church Militant, she beseeches God for the universal peace of the Church, and the whole state of Christians, and especially of those who then actually communicate.

5. MARRIAGE LAWFUL FOR THE CLERGY.

The Church of England, as truly Catholic and Christian, maintains, that priests, deacons, and men in holy orders, under the Gospel, may lawfully, as all others,

[1] [Compare Rom., vi., 10-21, with Heb., ix., 11-28.]

marry, if they find it expedient and necessary, and that by warrant from the Holy Scriptures.[1]

6. AUTHORITY OF THE CHURCH AND HER ORDERS.

The Church of England, also, with the Catholic, holds, that the Church is a corporation, founded and settled by God to maintain the communion of those who believe and are of that body; and, therefore, has power to maintain good order for the exercising of her holy offices, and all other circumstances, and to set limits, as occasion may require.[2] Thus, for liturgies and public prayers, praises, reading of Scriptures, expounding, or preaching; though there were no express precept of the New Testament what offices the public service of God is to consist of; forasmuch as, before the Gospel, they were always in use among God's people, she holds, that all traditions and ceremonies not repugnant to God's Holy Word, and ordained by public and legitimate authority, are not only lawful, but highly necessary for order, decency, and edification; and, therefore, alterable according to the diversity of times, nations, and customs, by the same authority.

She holds, that the governors, presidents, and superintendents of the Christian Church have the power of the keys, and faculty to exercise them upon notorious and scandalous offenders, by binding and loosing; and that such as are duly excommunicated and rescinded

[1] Gen., i., 27, 28; I. Cor., vii., 2; Heb., xiii., 4; Tit., i., 6; I. Cor., ix., 5.

[2] I. Cor., xi., 2, 3; I. Tim., ii., 1; James, v., 14, 15.

from the body of the Church are to be avoided, until, by true repentance and worthy penance, they be by the same authority reconciled to, and received into the Church again.[1]

The Church Catholic, truly reformed, holds, that archbishops, bishops, priests, and deacons, rightly and lawfully consecrated and ordained, are distinct orders in the Church of Christ, approved by and agreeable to the institution of the Lord Jesus, and uninterruptedly succeeding from the Apostles' time to the present age. And that this sacred Government of Episcopacy anciently took place immediately after the Apostles, and most probably even in their days; it being hardly conceivable, as so great an alteration as that of Presbyters, or Congregational, to Episcopal, could, in so short a space, have prevailed over the whole Church, and so long continued, had it been otherwise.

In the mean while, Episcopacy essentially considered, is only the appointment of one person of eminent sanctity and sufficiency to have the care of all the Churches within a certain precinct or diocese so authorised, (not arbitrarily or absolutely, but by laws, and in conjunction with a convenient number of assistants) that all the churches under his inspection be provided with good and able pastors; and to see to the discovery and repressing of all exorbitances, either of the ministers or their flocks. And that there is no one superior bishop, by any right divine, above another, but all in their

[1] Matt., xviii., 16, 17; I. Cor., v., 4, 5; I. Tim., i., 20; Tit., i. 11; iii., 10; Rom., xvi., 17.

respective governments are of like authority and power, though, as to civil preference, there may be a difference by the favour of princes, as that of Rome and Constantinople, because they were the imperial cities and the courts.

Lastly, she holds, that it is in the lawful power of church governors to order and appoint forms of public worship and such rites and ceremonies, as are decent and reverend for the solemnity of divine service; and if the matter be agreeable to the Holy Scriptures, and of indifferent nature, compel the refractory and peevish to conformity, especially so that it be not imposed as essential parts of worship, but as things alterable, as times and circumstances may require.[1]

7. CIVIL SUPREMACY OF THE STATE.

The Holy Catholic Reformed Church of Christ holds, that princes and supreme magistrates have, in their respective dominions, as keepers of both Tables,[2] the lawful cognizance of all causes, ecclesiastical as well as temporal and civil, for the restraining, punishing, and even putting to death evil doers, and for rewarding the good and obedient, of what degree soever, and may reform abuses and errors crept into either Church or State, and command their subjects to serve in lawful wars, to repel real injuries, or defend their kingdom; finally, that rebellion is upon what pretence soever unlawful.

[1] See Appendix B.

[2] Rom., xiii., 2, 4, 7; Titus, iii., 1; I. Pet., ii., 13, 14.

Thus was Moses king in Jeshurum, constituted by God keeper both of the Trumpets and Tables; and he it was (not Aaron) who delivered the ritual law. So, long after, David also instituted the courses of the priests, and Solomon deposed Abiathar, the high priest; Christ, our legislator, under the new law, detracting nothing from, but rather corroborating the secular power. So that, magistrates miscarrying in their duty, the people are obliged to obey; so their commands be lawful, though inconvenient; for no man may, on any pretence, rebel, but rather suffer for well doing.

PART III.

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, CONTRASTED WITH THE CHURCH OF ROME.

As to the rest, the duties and things, which the Reformed Church imposes to do and believe, are only such as are in themselves morally good, and tend to the perfection of our natures; and therefore do not oblige her sons and daughters to those trifling performances, which have nothing of real substance, as the bare reciting of such a number of Creeds, Paters, Aves, counted by beads and bawbles fitter for children. For religion is a rational and serious service of God; nor multiplies the orders of idle monks and vagrant friars, nor approves of pilgrimages, processions, the worship of images, and pictures of God the Father, Christ, or His saints, reliques, &c. She places no devotion in habits, *agnus-Deis*, scapulas, or celibacy by vows not in our power; but such as we are obliged to in our baptismal

promises, in holding which, she has assured promises of Divine assistance and acceptance, upon our earnest and sincere endeavour and application to Almighty God for His grace.

Upon all which premises the Church of England, reformed from the corruptions which we have enumerated in our former Chapter,[1] and restored to primitive purity, agrees and is in community with the true and ancient Catholic faith, wherever professed at this day. Nor separates she from any thing which, as such, she finds in any national or particular church, though in other things (which are corruptions in them) she abstains. Thus, with the present Greek Church she holds communion in their exhibiting the Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist in both species, rejects not the historical use of images, but the worship; as also purgatory, extreme unction, prayers to the saints, not the commemoration [of them.] Auricular Confession as a Sacrament, not private, for counsel and direction, comfort and ease of afflicted consciences. She permits the clergy to marry; and in all and most of which she agrees with the Nestorian, Jacobites, Abyssines, Maronites, Armenian Churches.[2]

Touching the existence, being, and attributes of God the Father, the Church of England differs from none of the modern famous confessions, and the same affirms of God the Word, and Sacred Spirit, and in most of their other Articles. But she never can depart from holding the Scriptures to be the only Rule of

[1] Chapter xi. [2] See for more in Paget's *Christianography*.

Faith, and to contain all things necessary to salvation; rejecting their opinions who either make tradition equal to them, or that they are defective or imperfect without them.

She maintains that the simple belief and practice of those certain and uncontroverted truths, wherein all parties agree, are sufficient for salvation. As to other differences and usages in religion less material, she bears with them, without prejudice or uncharitable censure.

The Church of England rejects not tradition, such as is taught by Christ and His Apostles, and by them preached to those who delivered it in ensuing ages, constantly and universally, according to the rule of *Vincentius Lirinensis;* or by which we are practically instructed how to understand the writer's mind in fundamentals, namely, such doctrines as are either plainly or by necessary consequence deducibly contained in Scripture, and agreeable to the sense of the Fathers of the purest ages after Christ. And such tradition she holds to be derived from as full authority as the Word itself.

The Creeds of the Church of England consist not in general principles only, in the bosom of which many other articles are included, equally necessary to be implicitly believed, but are as minute an explication of those *Prima Credibilia* as is necessary to salvation.

The Church of England gives to the Blessed Virgin and all the saints memorative honours, no inward soul submission, in her prayers and offices, no dependence, no invocations, no intercessions, no incense, thurification, candles, or consumptive offerings, or genuflexions;

but a commemoration of their exemplary and holy lives, patience, fortitude, and other virtues in suffering for the name of Christ; praising God for His grace and gifts in them, and praying that we may follow their steps, as they did Christ's.

The Church of England, as she did not demolish images tumultuously, but gravely and with good consideration, so she forbids not a decent use of historical representations, as did the first Christians, but with great care.

The Church of England affirms the Scriptures to be infallible, not the Pope, no, nor a Council with or without the Pope. She holds the Old Apostles' Creed, not the New of Trent; to trust in Christ's merits only, not in our own, nor in any saint's. That there is a hell, no purgatory or limbus.

The Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood, in commemoration of His passion, she holds with the Church of Rome, but not as a propitiation for the dead; she allows with her a real presence, but not also a corporeal; that both species were by Christ's institution given to all, also both affirm. But the Church of Rome takes away the cup; therefore, receiving with the Church of England is the safer.

That in the Public Office or Liturgy of the Church of England is nothing but what is consonant to the faith, the pontificians grant. In their Missal there are many errors. Service and prayers in an unknown tongue, Scripture reproves, the Church of Rome maintains. Therefore, the service and devotions of the

Church of England are to be preferred. And for ten years together after the Reformation, the Papists came both to prayers and sermons, the Pope offering to have consecrated and confirmed our Liturgy, would Queen Elizabeth have acknowledged his Headship.[1]

To worship God alone, say the Papists, is most safe and pious; so does the Church of England, but not images. To pray to God in the name of Christ both grant, not to saints and through their merits. Therefore, most safe is the doctrine and practice of the Church of England, in her prayers, devotions, and intercessions; so that whatever the Church of England holds not of that of Rome are plainly superfluous, doubtful, and dangerous additions to the truth; such as are her doctrines of infallibility, Transubstantiation, purgatory, merits, works of supererogation, vain repetitions, rosaries, worshipping saints, angels, images, and reliques, with lustrations, sufflations, exorcisms, anathemas, chrisms, vows, pilgrimages, processions, incensing, probable doctrine, baptizing of bells, expurgatory indulgences, sham miracles, legends, and other traditions of men, novel inventions, and will worship, and innumerable other corruptions kept up for secular interests.

[1] Camden's Elizabeth. [Twisden, p. 175. Bramwell, i. 248. "For divers years in Q. Elizabeth's reign there was no recusant known in England; but even they who were most addicted to Roman opinions yet frequented our Churches and public assemblies, and did join with us in the use of the same prayers and divine offices, without any scruple, till they were prohibited by a papal bull for the interest of the Roman court."—Quoted by Dr. Wordsworth. Theoph. Anglic.]

The Church of England has in it as learned persons, more works of charity, better provision for her clergy (things well examined) than the Church of Rome, whatever is pretended.

The Church of England teaches devotion without superstition, is modest, not garish; practical, not speculative; sober, not fantastical; keeps a mean between extremes.

The Church of England is neither new from Luther, Henry the Eighth, nor Calvin, but as ancient as the Gospel, and communicating with more Christian Churches than any whatsoever, and with all in general, who are orthodox; and therefore is the most truly Catholic of any Church now extant in the world, and to be embraced before them all.

The Church of England has the Word of God and the Sacraments for its faith; and whoso believes, and does as that prescribes, is a member of the true Church, though not of the present Roman. And from any such Church in the world she does not separate; and so is more Catholic, and less schismatic. And if in what she holds they all agree, there is unity, and what is most united, is most safe.

The Church of England yet judges none uncharitably, who differ from her. But the question is between her and the Church of Rome (which is her only antagonist considerable who so uncharitably damns all, besides herself, and has altered the doctrine and discipline they so contend for)—we or they—we by substraction, they by addition? The case, says a learned

bishop,[1] is clear: The Apostles contracted this doctrine into a summary, that is, the *Creed.* The Primitive Fathers expounded it when it stood in need of clearer explication. The General Council of Ephesus forbade all men to exact any more of a Christian at the baptismal profession. Into this faith were we of the Church of England baptized; unto this faith do we adhere. Whereas the Church of Rome has changed and enlarged her Creeds by the addition of new Articles.[2]

We profess and avow that discipline which the whole Christian world practised during the first six hundred years, and all the Eastern, Southern, and Northern Churches to this day. They have changed the beginning of unity into an universality of jurisdiction, and sovereignty of power about General Councils, which the Christian world for six hundred years did never know, nor the greatest part of it even to this day acknowledge. Let St. Peter be the First or Chief, or (in a right sense) Prince of the Apostles, or first mover in the Church: all this extends but to a primacy of order; the sovereignty of ecclesiastical power was in the Apostolical College, to which a General Council now succeeds.

It is evident enough, whether they, or we of the Church of England do hold ourselves better to the legacy, and religion of Christ and His Apostles. Protestants do not attempt to make themselves a distinct body from the rest of the Christian world, much less

[1] Dr. Bramhall, Bishop of Derry.

[2] See Coun. Trent, sub finem 4th.

arrogate to themselves alone the name of the true Church, as do the Papists. But they content themselves to be part of the Catholic Church. That they have any difference among them, either in doctrine or discipline, it is the fault of the Court of Rome, which would not hear of an uniform reformation in the Western Church. But that their controversies are neither so many nor of such moment, as the Papists pretend, the harmony of confessions will demonstrate to all who inspect it. Let, then, this suffice for the justification of our excellent Church, which, as I said, judges none; but hopes and prays that some innocent persons among all, that with sincerity worship, pray to, and praise God in the Lord's Prayer, confess the true Catholic Creeds, as contained in that of the Apostles—following the laws of God to their power—approving both Testaments as the rule of faith, and who are incorporated into the Church by baptism—nourished by the Holy Eucharist—God may, and she hopes will, have pity for such; but for nothing else of the stubble and straw superstructed on that foundation. In a word, that the simple belief of these certain truths wherein all parties agree, cannot fail. For what remains, then, the truth of the Christian, and consequently of that of the Church of England, (which has been the scope and end of all our researches) from the being of God, creation, providence, economy, and government of the world, and His Church through so many ages, is made so perspicuous, as that there is no merit in believing it. It is so convincing, that, like the methods of geometry,

every part supports the other, and all of it depends upon such principles, as are almost self-evident, and by natural consequence as far as we are capable of any thing; so that none but invincible, obstinately blinded Atheists can deny it.

To conclude. The Church of England (whose preference we undertake) grounds all her positive Articles on the Sacred Scriptures, and is content to be judged (as Bishop Jewel long since undertook to prove) by the joint and constant consent and belief of the Fathers for the first five hundred years after Christ, when the Church was, by all men's confession, in her purest age; and by the councils held in those times, and to submit to them in all points of doctrine. Nor will she refuse any tradition that is universal and Apostolical; nor any definition of the Church, in which the Church has recourse to Holy Scriptures, and thrusts nothing in as fundamentals in the faith, which the Scripture is silent on. As for the rest, the Church of England is instructed with an excellent Body of Articles, doctrine of holiness, discipline, and order, both material and prudent, with a Government Apostolical; with dignity neither splendid nor sordid; too considerable for contempt, too little for envy or detraction; decent and grave, and, in truth, defective in nothing which would instruct and adorn a real Christian.

In a word, she is thus reformed by casting out what was justly offensive and intolerable; yet, by God's singular Providence, without the least tumult or violence, namely, by lawful authority both of Church and State,

maturely consulting Scripture, antiquity, and reason, rejecting nothing but what according to these qualifications was absolutely to be reformed; and therefore may worthily be that rule and *Norma* by which others should reform, and many have earnestly desired.

So true and Apostolic a Church is the Church of England, and so conformable with the Universal Church in its purest temper and constitution, that, if their foundation stand, ours cannot fail, no, though heaven and earth should mingle. And a severe sentence on us will take hold of them. For, as we have, *ex abundanti*, showed, we hold the ancient symbols they held; but those who have defected from these leave not us, but our most holy faith. And what they add, was never taught, much less received before. In these additions, too, we take leave of modern Rome, or rather, she departs from us, and has made the schism, whilst yet we are in communion with her, as she was, when for her faith she was spoken of through all the world.

Thus, we have demonstrated that the way of salvation is not at all uncertain in the Christian Church, as professed and reformed in the Church of England, (which was the motive that first urged and engaged me on this strict enquiry) seeing it evidently appears to be no other than the true and living way, which Jesus Christ has shown us. And of this are we strongly assured, by finding the disciples of the Apostles, fathers, and doctors of the Church, both going before us, and succeeding to this age; professing the same faith, converting nations, planting it with their hands, watering

it even with their blood, and attesting it by all that can morally be required, to infix, propagate, and establish its belief. This they have effected by their preaching, miracles, writings, and sufferings, giving glory to its Divine Author, whose dictates and decrees when met in Council, and doctrine transmitted by book, are so unanimous in all that is necessary, that we dare provoke not only any single gainsayer, but all the host of them to produce a solid argument to the contrary, before equal and impartial judges.

To sum up all, I will conclude both this Chapter and present Treatise in the best words, a little varied, which even that unhappy Doctor[1] spake and published, and happy for him had he rested there. "That the evidence which the good Providence of God has given me of my adherence to the Christian faith, as by the Church of England professed, is, after all my inquiry, altogether as great as I could in reason have expected; and I am sure much greater than I needed in modesty have desired. And the satisfaction, that upon the inquiry I have received, is so very great that, as much as I esteem myself obliged to the goodness of the Divine Providence for the standing work of my redemption, I think myself no less obliged for the wonderful and amazing evidence that he has vouchsafed me of it. The security of the gift is as invaluable as the gift itself; for it is certainly the highest contentment that human nature is capable of, to live not with a mere fluctuating

[1] Dr. Parker, since Bishop of Oxford, in his *Demonstratio Evangel.*

hope and unexamined belief of things so infinitely important, but a just and reasonable assurance of immortal felicity."

All which considered, seriously perpended, weighed, and compared, to the utmost of my poor ability, *here*, that is, in communion with the Church of England, as the most Catholic and Apostolic now upon the face of the whole earth, do I fix myself; and shall, by the goodness and assistance of Almighty God enabling me, continue to my life's end.

Hic terminus est. Amen!

CONCLUSION.

The substance, then, and conclusion of the whole matter is this: That Almighty God, having created the universe, made man to be the prince of the sublunary world, designed for a celestial, to glorify and contemplate Him; and in order to the fitting him with faculties capable of a more perfect state, engraved in him a natural law, which should show him both the manner and reason of his duty; and gave him also abilities sufficient to perform it, with one only prohibition, for probation of his obedience and gratitude to his Benefactor, (easy and most reasonable by him to have been observed) namely, the restraining of his appetite from the taking of a certain fruit, growing amidst such variety of other delicious fruits and refreshments. But man, in whom then was all mankind, through the temptation of a newly lapsed and rebellious spirit, envious of his felicity, prevailing on the weaker vessel, seducing the man's com-

panion, and she, her husband, to eat of this forbidden tree, they both of them fell into the same condemnation, by which that law written in their hearts became, in a manner, blotted out. Their excellent faculties, knowledge, and original rectitude were so exceedingly weakened, darkened, and sadly disordered, that there was absolute need of its being totally renewed by a more supernatural law and grace, to restore and reconcile them to their offended Maker. For, though there was still some faint remainder and tracts of moral, and strictures of religion, so miserably were they worn out and clouded, not to say, altogether dead, that they could do nothing well, nothing indeed tolerable or agreeable to God, without great imperfection, and that so great, as never to have been able to recover the bliss and happy condition they were fallen from, condemned as they were, and banished to a lingering, anxious, and painful life; and after a short one here, to that death and dissolution with which they were threatened, upon their disobedience and breaking covenant.

But so it is, that the Divine Philanthropy and pity, commiserating his creature, and fleshly frailty, more than that of the sublimest fallen angels (who indeed fell from a more exalted, and none to tempt them but their own ambition and foul ingratitude) upon a second covenant, a new law and promise of better obedience for the time to come, was pleased to enter into terms with man and his posterity. And that, though for his prevarication, and in part to verify his former denunciation—"*In the day that thou eatest thereof* (namely, of

the forbidden fruit) *thou shalt surely die,*" he was to undergo both a temporal of the body, and an eternal death of the soul, as due to sin, yet in contemplation of One who interposed, and was indeed mighty to save, namely, the second Person in the Trinity, (who that He might propitiate, freely offered to take upon Him the human nature, suffer in it, and pay the price of their redemption) the Eternal Father was pleased not only to accept of it, and to impose on his sinning creature a temporal death only, but to make it a passage to a better life, and to restore him not to an earthly but a heavenly Paradise.

And albeit this was but obscurely hinted at the first, and almost all along, during the infancy of the antediluvian world, and still but glimmeringly in the patriarchal, till the prophetic age, though more and more illuminated as they approached nearer the Advent of this gracious Saviour, namely, the Messiah; yet was it from time to time made known to holy men peculiarly favoured. First, by tradition, whilst the ages of men were protracted, and so not needing letters to convey the truth; and after, when abbreviated, typically by way of symbol, in the Old Testament delivered to Moses and the Prophets to instruct the people, especially one selected nation, and most plainly, to all the world, by our Blessed Lord and Redeemer, in the New Testament, (or second Covenant) when the veil being rent and partition-wall removed, what was till now obscure became perspicuous. The law of carnal ordinances and substituted rites, difficult, uneasy, and in-

effectual, was changed into an easy, rational, spiritual, and delightful service; the Father (as it was said) of His immense kindness, accepting of the love and infinitely amazing charity of His beloved Son, who, for the sake of weak and sinful man, was now become incarnate of a Virgin, derived from the seed of our first lapsed parents; yet so that being divinely conceived, and therefore unstained and void of sin, by assuming human flesh, it might be possible for Him to suffer in our nature, and expiate not only for the offence of our progenitors, but for the whole race of mankind derived from them, upon their acceptance of those easy conditions of that second Covenant, namely, the living a holy life, in new obedience, according to His own revealed will. And this our Blessed Saviour did, by His own impeccant, holy, and exemplary life, admirable doctrine, perfect obedience, bitter passion, voluntary death—which yet (having purged our ransom to the full, and satisfied the Divine justice) He gloriously vanquished, when by His resurrection from the grave He triumphantly ascended into heaven; by which He has justified His undertaking for us, and is now at the right hand of His Father, continually representing the merits of His passion, as carrying with Him that blood into the Holy of Holies, which the high priest did, till then, yearly represent in the sanctuary as a figure of what was to come, the sacrifices of the law being too impotent to do away sins, or make the atonement.

Thus did our Great Saviour, interceding for His redeemed, that is, for as many as by new and universal

obedience (human and unavoidable infirmities abated) accept and take hold of those conditions, presented in His Holy Gospel — design them mansions with Himself in glory; and, in the mean time, during His necessary absence, (that the fulness of both Jew and Gentile may at last come in, and what He has determined be accomplished) assists the Church with His Holy Spirit.

Thus, has our benign Jesus, in our nature, fulfilled all righteousness for us; and, being God and man, by ineffable union has reconciled man to God, and made him a new creature. By this faith were the Fathers of old saved; namely, in virtue of the Messiah to come, as we are now in His being come; nor is there any other name under Heaven by which we can be saved. These good tidings, this whole economy, have we transmitted to us from the Sacred Records of Scripture, even the eternal Gospel of indefectible truth, containing the entire doctrine of salvation, the secret counsel of the Father, never to have been known to us by nature, but by grace—to the Greeks foolishness; but, to those who humbly embrace it, the power of God to eternal life.

This is the great and astonishing work, which the Lord our Saviour came to finish in His own person, and ordained and sent others, who should in His name declare His holy will and gracious intentions, upon our acceptance, repentance, and new obedience, a lively and operative faith in Christ Incarnate, crucified, dead, raised, ascended, and mediating. On these terms was

our reconciliation made, not as if by our works we merited aught, but of His free grace accepting our endeavours, sincerely complying with that Divine Assistance, sent from the Father and the Son; (from whom He from eternity proceeded) and who is to remain with the faithful to the end, and to lead them into all truth. He it is who supplies our defects, pities our infirmities, teaches us to pray, is our Intercessor here on earth to the Father and the Son, as the Son was to the Father and the Holy Ghost, when He was on earth, and is now in Heaven—whence He shall shortly come again, to judge the world in righteousness, and lead the elect, first their souls, and, at that time, both soul and body, (refined and glorified like His own) to those mansions of bliss and glory, which He has prepared for them from the beginning of the world. Amen!

These things Holy Scripture shows, ministers teach, the Gospel interpreting the Law, the event of things, the Gospel; grace rectifying nature, Moses mediating under the one, *figuratively;* Christ, under the other, *really;* the one by the blood of bulls and goats; (beggarly rudiments) the other, by the precious blood of JESUS, the Lamb of God, slain from the beginning of the world; the Moral Law, insculped and written on stone; the Evangelical, on the tables of the heart; that for a time, this for ever; that bringing death; this, life; that, terror and fear; this, love and assurance; that, temporal and earthly enjoyments; this, celestial and eternal. And thus to believe and do, is the whole duty of man and his perfection. This is the True Reli-

gion, the good old way, which we are not only to inquire after, and search for diligently, but walk in all the days of our life.

And here I should put the period, but to obviate one query, which, though more curious than at all necessary; yet, that I may leave nothing unanswered, which may obviate any possible temptation, and justify this gracious economy of Almighty God, in the method of His most wise and admirable dispensation, I think it not amiss to lengthen this conclusion with a paragraph or two. The question is, why Almighty God did not, by some more compendious way, either by ordaining man to a state of impossibly falling, solve in consequence all these difficulties, or, for to illustrate his power and grace, freely pardon it?

Indeed, the Omnipotent God, considered in His absolute power, could have remitted sin *gratis;* but, considered in that decree made from all eternity of punishing sin, and as a governor bound to maintain it, He was not to exercise that power. Now, no creature could reverse that decree, nor angel nor man satisfy Divine justice. Christ, then, was alone qualified for it, being without spot, even in His human nature, which rendered His offering holy; and His being God, gave it infinite value; so that by both He was fitted and qualified to discharge the debt. Christ, then, was the cause of remission, the Father being moved, for the invaluable price so paid, to free us from the punishment, and enter into a new covenant of grace, upon easy conditions of faith and obedience, before His

rigorous justice took place. Wherefore, He is called the Mediator of a better Covenant.

Now, that Almighty God was pleased to take this way rather than the other, (as it becomes not us to search beyond sobriety), since He is a free agent, and may do what He will with His own, even as the potter with the clay—what is man, that he should say to God, what doest thou? or what makest thou?—nevertheless, we are sure that what He has done and determined, according to the counsel of His own blessed will, is most wise, and absolutely just. For, had not man fallen and sinned, His attribute of mercy and compassion would have wanted an object, as well as His justice and righteousness. That stupendous work of His Omnipotence, to the admiration of angels and men, that of man's redemption by the Incarnation of the Lord Jesus, and all that He performed of wonderful in His life, death, resurrection, and ascension, the rewards of virtue, and punishment of vice had never been heard of; nor had mankind had occasion to glorify the riches of His grace and inexpressible love in Christ, which passes understanding, and is, of all His attributes, the most illustrious. All the creatures and works he made do not so much touch us as His love and mercy. It cost Him only His word, to raise the world out of nothing, (for He spake and it was done; He commanded, and they were made); but His love cost Him the heart-blood of His beloved Son. What greater or more worthy of God, than that a justice inflexible, and that could not forgive a crime unpunished, should, by a

stupendous act of clemency, pardon without punishing the criminal, and yet find out a way to manifest His most tender love, without the least suspicion of approving and loving our sins? And to preserve His sovereign authority, without destroying those who rebelled against it! That He should heal by stripes, and purchase life by dying, and exalt dust and ashes to partake of the Divine Nature![1]

These things pass the height of all ideas. Here only, then, it is where Majesty and Love sit together in the same throne, where they receive the adoration of worlds to eternity. Oh, depth! oh, love! love stronger than death, and incomprehensible! *Nec satiabor illis diebus dulcedine mirabili, considerare altitudinem consilii tui super salutem generis humani.*[2]

After all this, we are yet to date the benefit of pardon of our sins, and the effects of this infinite grace, not immediately from our Blessed Saviour's satisfaction, but from the time of our rightly believing in Him. His blood and death did only so procure His favour, as to put us in a capacity of being pardoned, whilst it is our repentance and universal obedience which actually applies it to our particular benefit. No faith can justify, but that which works by love for the love of Him who so loved us, and gave Himself for us. Nor may we (without presumption) rely on Christ's merits and death for our acquittal, unless, also, our sins die and be crucified also.

[1] II. Cor., vi., 21; I. Pet., ii., 24.

[2] Aug. Confess., l. 9, c. 6.

In a word, there is no security in any thing to any person, but in the points of hearty endeavour of leading a holy life, and in certain articles and instructions to determine our wills, and incline them to the obedience of Christ, as we are taught in that sum of our faith, *the Apostles' Creed.* All the rest is moral and fallible. This is the form of that sound doctrine which we are to rely on, and whatsoever else is plainly set down in Scriptures, and actually conveyed to us by perspicuous places, and separated (as to questions of necessary and non-necessary) by that comprehensive symbol. Other matters are impertinent pretences, proceeding from interests, superstition, and vanities of men, or mere conjectures and opinions, and no parts of necessary worship, nor distinct religion, but (as a worthy person calls them) sects, and fragments of Christianity.

Let us, therefore, search out the truth in the Divine Oracles; prepare ourselves by humble and devout prayer for a right understanding thereof, steadfastly practising such things as are plainly described and incontrovertibly contained in them; and expect illumination, answerable to the faculties which God has given us, that is, Reason, History, and human assistances and acquisitions, without which we shall be in danger of being led into dreams and fancies, and the world (as the same learned person [1] judiciously predicted) never be rid of religious lunacies, heresies, and enthusiasms.

In the mean time, (as we have often hinted) no man should be hated for his profession, because he has not

[1] Mr. Thorndike's Epilogue.

lighted on the same education, books, or conversation, which *we* have enjoyed, by God's peculiar and special Providence; but be thankful and humble, and pray for our erring and less illuminated brother. For, we may not persecute a doctrine by breaking a commandment, nay, all of them at once, by our uncharity. We should, therefore, be careful of being over-dogmatical in private opinions, especially, of adopting them into the family of faith. If we have found the foundation, which Christ and His Apostles laid, (for no other foundation can we lay, but what is trash and stubble) that is, what body and system of articles are simply necessary to salvation—such as they taught, and such as the Church of England tenders—we need go no farther for our religion; and what she teaches is what Catholic religion always taught—even an habitual Paradise of piety, justice, integrity, mercy, charity, humility, temperance, sobriety, continence and chastity, obedience and subjection, peace and unity, love and heavenly-mindedness, courage and constancy, and a generous contempt of this empty and fallacious world. This is the religion, and these the virtues, which, coming from God, came down from Heaven, and will carry us up to Him thither again.

Since, then, we believe there is a Supreme Being, wise, powerful, just, and superlatively good; that He has promulgated such a faith, designed such retributions, that upon every moment of our lives depends the eternal interest of our souls, that He with whom we have to do is no respecter of persons, and that, after this short

and umbratile life, we launch into the state which must for ever be our portion, how infinitely does it concern us, among such a number of pretences, to be circumspect in the choice of our religion, serious and sincere in our profession of it, knowing that our labour shall not be in vain! For He is faithful who has promised, and will be our guide and comfort unto death, and raise our corruptible bodies into incorruptible, immortal beings, freed from pain or want, fear or temptation error or disorder, ignorance and imperfection; in serenity of mind, tranquillity of conscience, happiness indicible and not to be expressed, in the vision of that infinitely glorious God our Redeemer; where, conversing with angels and saints, we shall be filled with wisdom and knowledge, supernatural and intuitive, new discoveries, self-delight, and self-complacency; in a word, with the fruition of as mighty a happiness as the Divine beneficence, power, and wisdom can contrive, and our exalted nature is susceptible of, in the utmost and most exalted capacity, to all eternity. Oh, ravishing joy! oh, desirable state! oh, life worthy a thousand deaths to attain! whom have we in heaven but Thee? whom on earth that I desire in comparison of Thee? My soul thirsteth for Thee; my flesh also languishes after Thee. Oh! when shall I come and appear before the presence of my God? *Tunc, tunc satiabor, cùm apparuerit gloria tua.*

What, then, so noble and truly heroical, what so reasonable, as the Christian religion, restored to its primitive purity! which teaches the way to this happiness,

and even compels us to embrace it; a religion so adapted to the perfection of our nature, so adequate to our intellectual part, and, though full of mystery, yet not such as contradicts our reason, though they exceed it, and, by being most wonderful and stupendous, become the fitter to be believed to be the work of an Omnipotent Power. For such are the Incarnation, the Hypostatical Union, the Adorable Trinity, the Resurrection.

And, as to the miracles we have enumerated, we have asserted how openly they were wrought; the witnesses living when the things were written. St. Luke records the Acts of the Apostles, which he saw; St. John, what he both saw, touched, and heard of the Word of Life; St. Peter, the same. And by these were thousands converted, who only heard, though they did not see; and blessed are they who so believe. And who can disbelieve, considering the connexion of circumstances amounting (as we have shown) to a natural and infallible certainty? Add to these, the constancy and gallantry of so many thousands sealing their faith by their suffering for it. Nor fire, nor sword, nor loss, nor calamity, being able to shake their belief, even of the most tender and delicate virgins and little children, as well as matrons and old and feeble men, as well as the strong and vigorous, who were not terrified with shameful exposures, the teeth of wild beasts, and all the inventions of the most bloody tyrants.

Such assurance, such confidence, such constancy, such ardent love, possessing the hearts of such martyrs and confessors, never could have been, had not

some supernatural Divine Power assisted them from above — whatever else we meet with (and they but very few and inconsiderable) of the ancient Pagan devoted bravery, or the later Vanini, Spinosa, and other Atheists, proceeding from glory, pride of reason, spite, and stupidity, without any farther prospect or rational end. For without this there could be no true felicity, seeing all past things vanish like mists, and even princes and cruel usurpers, who kill and destroy others unjustly, are continually dogged with fears and jealousies, and are in perpetual danger; and the rich and great in favour are continually exposed to the vicissitudes of fortune, fire, water, treachery; that is, to the uncertainties of worldly prosperity, as God sees expedient, which renders them miserable, stripped of these deceitful circumstances; so that nothing is certain, nothing stable, nothing that entirely can fill and satiate the soul and capacity of the meanest beggar, so as to acquiesce, and be incapable of receiving more, but the truth of God and His holy religion, the fruition to come in Him, who fills heaven and earth, and is fulness itself.

Of this, besides the Holy Scriptures, we have the testimonies of the Asian Churches planted by the Apostles and their successors, the constant series of bishops, priests, sacraments, symbols, and creeds, preaching the same doctrine. We have their assemblies on the Lord's Day for public worship; the apologies of learned men, from time to time, against Pagans, Infidels, and miracles asserting the Christian truth. We have histories, sermons, comments, disputes, confes-

sions, (yea, and that even of our adversaries) martyrs, councils, synods, conventions, canons, laws, decrees, and sanctions of Christian princes and emperors; and, above all, the purity of its precepts, so agreeable to the impressions even of nature itself; without images or statues, or erecting temples to include or confine the Deity (as the false religion had), whose temple is the universe, and our hearts the altar, our prayers and praises the sacrifice and incense most grateful to Him whom we adore.

Nor believe we only, for these outward manifestations, His works, which are ever before us, but because we feel Him operate and work within us, by the efficacy of His word and sacraments, producing those saving graces which lead to eternal life. Nor has Almighty God, the Author of all, imposed any difficulty in our way, but what a meek and subacted Christian may rationally resign to, and competently understand, by diligent and humble application, and with ordinary means. All that is necessary is (as we have shown) plain and easy in our faith. She requires no implicit belief, no contradiction and impossibilities, countenances no presumption, lays no stress on things uncertain, or impertinent human inventions and busy nothings; but makes her votaries devout, not superstitious; holy, not self-conceited; modest and serious, not garish and theatrical; but is solid and material, steady and infinitely satisfactory. We are satisfied in the Divine goodness and candour in interpreting the actions and methods of our wise and great Creator; and, being conscious of our

own sincerity in keeping close to the rules of Scripture, where it is plain, think ourselves at liberty where it is silent, and humbly take direction of spiritual guides where obscure or doubtful; and so go cheerfully on our way.

And thus we have seen nature, prudence, society, conscience, our own hearts, Scripture, antiquity, universal consent, every object we behold and feel, convince us of the most important truths,—the aspectable world, its goodly frame, Providence and its economy, the course of the celestial bodies, revolutions, seasons, instincts of animals, structure of our own bodies, and the utter impossibility that every part and atom of nature should so concur to the assertion of a Deity, and leave any scruple to infidelity and unbelief.

He, then, who is of no religion is, of all religious men false or true, the most foolish, the most inexcusable, and most miserable, because, whatever may happen to the other, he is certain to miscarry; and better therefore were it uncertainly to err than certainly to perish. But, having the true religion before us, we are doubly to be blamed if we neglect it; for be we ever so zealous in our profession, if it be not truth we profess, piety requires more than merely good nature, inclination, and meaning well—namely, the knowledge and the culture of the truth, for the improvement of our lives. Nor does God so much regard what is well intended, according to our fancies, as what Himself commands and expects for so mighty a reward. Let those, then, take heed, who have substituted so many new devices

into worship, not only no where prescribed, but every where forbidden.

If, then, the right eye of external pomp offend, pluck it out; if the right hand of secular interest, cut it off and cast it from thee. And let us use all diligence to make our calling and election sure, though with fear and trembling. Let us strive to enter the strait gate, and contend for the sacred truth once delivered. It is highly worth the pain, the cost, and all we have to purchase, a pearl of price, a crown immarcessible, and which fadeth not away.

The consideration of our immortal souls and future state should make us value ourselves more than to think we were made only to eat, and drink, and sleep, and sport a few years, and drown ourselves in pleasures, which perish in their using. These will soon have an end, and then all our thoughts perish. Wherefore, he who intends to be a true Christian should awaken his courage, stir up his industry, and be always cultivating his graces—prepare that noble particle so nearly related to the Divine Nature, and subdue and vanquish his sensual and ignoble inclinations. And the thought of living for ever should keep him from being fond of the present, and teach us to look down with a godly and generous contempt on the vanities of this life. We belong to another country, to another prince, to quite another state, where our Blessed Lord, the Author and Finisher of our faith, and the religion we profess, is the Light that illustrates the centre of all events, the interpretation of all the Mosaical rites and ceremonies, (which

had been most extravagant, without relation to our Messiah) the foundation of all virtue, which would have no force or sufficient motive, but upon account of that immortality and glory revealed by Him,—the basis of the most inviolable sentiments of conscience, which were else but error and illusion, were our religion false.

The resplendent character of that wisdom we see diffused through the whole creation—the consummation of all our hopes; for, if our faith be not true, we are of all creatures the most miserable—the centre of all the certainty and evidence of our knowledge; for what is certain, if our souls, being only a concourse of atoms, without that immortal spirituality our religion teaches? since it would require another contingency and set of particles to frame the first notions quite repugnant to those we have. In a word, without the True Religion, which teaches us to know ourselves, and has revealed life and immortality, there is no more salvation for reason than for our conscience.

To conclude, then, and wind up all: let us establish it in and [make it] possess ourselves—that the end of man is the end and scope of our most holy religion; and the end of our religion, the end and sovereign good of man. All that is in man seeks it; the insatiable curiosity of our souls, continually aspiring to new objects, asks and inquires after it; and then our most holy faith reveals, and, because it reveals, Almighty God to us, it reveals all we can desire. The infinite avidity of our spirits is unsatisfied with all we see and can enjoy here; and therefore is impatient for that alone which alone can

bestow it. It was never before understood or conceived that, to replenish the vast void of our hearts, we should accomplish it by glorifying God, by resigning, renouncing, removing ourselves from ourselves, and give all to God.

These, I say, are paradoxes, only verified in the Christian religion, supplying the defects of our nature, to establish the Religion of Nature.

Consider but what we have said in this Treatise; and you must acknowledge that, not our imagination, which forms the natural religion, assures us of its truth—not the Mosaical revelation—not the very heart and interior of the natural man—but with, and above all these, the moral of Christ, His doctrine, His end, effects — the Testament produced, and rendered incontestable by so many Divine characters and matters of fact, which oracles declared, prophets announced, miracles confirmed, martyrs sealed, time has continued, the whole world has embraced; which is the light of our senses, the eye of our reason. All we hear, and see, and feel, and taste of the Word of Life, asserts its Divine origin. Encompassed, then, with such a cloud of witnesses, what shall we say, but that it is the very finger of God—the work of the Great, and Wise, and Most Holy God, manifested in Christ, who is God, blessed for ever! To Whom be glory, praise, and thanksgiving, for ever and ever! *Amen!*

APPENDIX.

A.

Baptism in private channels is inconvenient, unless in case of necessity. It would seem as if we were ashamed of our Christian profession; and there is not a more essential way to destroy all public solemnities of worship. All baptisms, in the primitive times, were most public in rivers and ponds, as that of our blessed Saviour by John the Baptist. And the Emperor Constantine the Great (though disappointed) intended to have been baptized in Jordan. Afterwards, they built fonts near the churches, then in their porches, and at last in the churches, never allowing any private baptisms, save in cases of necessity and danger of death.

The contrary custom was introduced by the late sectaries, and upon connivance, and to avoid the ceremony of the cross and sponsors. Others adopted it for state and delicacy; and in our fanatic state of civil war, when not only all ceremonies, but indeed all sacraments were, in a manner, abolished; so that, in many places, people were necessitated to get it done privately; and it has thence obtained, to the scandal of religion; the infant being to be publicly owned and received into Christ's congregation, and by its susceptors and undertakers solemnly undertaking to see it educated like a Christian, and for edification of the persons present.

Godfathers, in our Church, speak, by way of substitution, in the infant's stead, promising to do their endeavours to initiate the child, and procure him an early interest, till he know his own duty; which is a great act of charity.

Exorcism was used before baptism, when a Heathen or Pagan was made a proselyte; because they were to renounce the worship of devils, or false gods, from which they came.

It is not of the necessity of the means that infants are in danger dying unbaptized; but the wilful neglect, despising, or profanin the ordinance. God does not annex his grace of necessity to th element, which may not, perhaps, be always in our power.

We also argue, from the Covenant of Grace, to which Christ ha admitted infants: *I am thy God and the God of thy* seed *after thee.* To you *and* to your children *are the promises made.*[2] Whence w say: those who have part in the Covenant of Grace ought also t receive the seal of that Covenant and Sacrament, which is the *Sym bolum* of the alliance. Now, not only all the Faithful have share o the Covenant, but their children also. Therefore, not only th Faithful, but also their children, ought to participate of the seal, &c *Therefore, repent,* says the Apostle, *and be every one of you bap tized in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sin* (observe) *for to you* and to your children *are the promises made.*

Again:—To whomsoever pertains the reason of the Command, t him belongs the Command itself. Now, to the children of the Faithfu pertains the reason of the Command of being baptized. *Ergo,* th first proposition is infallibly true; the second proved by St. Pete (as before), as if he had said, All to whom the promise of God i Christ is made ought to be baptized; but this promise is to children therefore, they ought to be baptized. Now that they have part i the Covenant,[3] St. Paul, speaking of holiness and consecration, mad by virtue of the Covenant and alliance, says, That the unbelievin or infidel husband is *sanctified in the believing or Christian wife otherwise were* your children *polluted, but now are* your childre *holy.*

Moreover, those who are consecrated, or saints of God, ought t receive the mark or seal of their sanctity, &c.; but the children o the Faithful are saints and consecrated to God, and therefore ough to receive it.

For so our blessed Saviour[4]—*For to such belongs the kingdo of Heaven.*

Again:—Christ on earth was pleased graciously to receive littl infants, rebuking those who would have kept them back. An doubtless, now He is ascended to heaven, He will not take it i that they are presented and consecrated to Him in baptism. I

[1] Gen., xvii. 7.
[2] Acts, ii., 38, 39.
[3] 1. Cor., vii., 14.
[4] Matt., xix., 14.

augmenting His glory, shall we think He has diminished His love?

Again:—To whomsoever appertains the thing signified, the figure appertains likewise as the crown to the king, though born an infant king. And to little children belongs the kingdom even of heaven. Therefore, to them belong the crown and badge.[1] *Go, teach all nations, baptizing them,* &c. Now, the word *nations* comprehends all ages and sexes whatsoever, wherein all are not capable of teaching, but are all of baptizing. We have many famous instances of whole families being baptized in Scripture: *Lydia* and all her household; the *Gaoler* and his family;[2] Stephanus and all his domestics.[3] Is it credible so many families should be without children? Besides, children were circumcised on the eighth day. Why not a Sacrament for Christian children as well as for the Jews? Christ came not to lessen the favours of God, but to increase them. Therefore, all who were to be circumcised under the first Covenant ought to be baptized under the second, by a parity of reason. Nor did our Saviour come to destroy, but to alter the Sacraments from carnal and gross to spiritual and refined. Had not baptism succeeded circumcision, neither had any Sacrament among the Christians succeeded to that of circumcision; and so should the Synagogue have received more privilege and grace than the Church of Christ. See the antitype! *You are* (says St. Paul) *circumcised with a circumcision* made without hands, &c.[4]

Objectum: Baptism is the seal of faith in Christ, and infants, being incapable of faith, are incapable of the seal also, since the seal belongs but to those to whom the thing sealed belongs.

Responsum: Circumcision was also the seal of the righteousness of faith.[5] Now, as in the person of Abraham, who was circumcised in his old age, the circumcision was the seal of faith already formed in his heart; but in the person of Isaac, circumcised the eighth day, it was the seal of the faith which should be in him, in his time: so, in respect of the Faithful, baptism is the seal of the faith which shall or ought to be forgotten in them, when they arrive to competent age. Now, if it be demanded why we admit not children as well to the holy Eucharist, since the Jews did theirs to the Passover, we affirm the Jews did not so, till their children were of capacity to

[1] Matt., xxviii. [2] Acts, xvi., 32. [3] I. Cor., i., 66.
[4] Coloss., ii., 11. [5] Rom. iv., 11.

ask them the meaning of it, and so do we ours, so soon as they have the dispositions required expressly by the apostle.[1]

B.—Episcopacy and Church-Government.

When our blessed Saviour promised to be with his apostles to the end of the world, it could not be understood of their persons who were to die before, but of their successors, and that so far as is necessary to the present state of the Church.

The government of the Church is but its external garment, the diversity of which affects not its essence. For at first it was governed by bishops, priests, and deacons, successors to the apostles, and not by any *one* as spiritual head above other bishops, though one had place above another, in regard of the capital or imperial city and chief province, who was called *Metropolitan*. All which were but prerogatives of honour and civil dignity only, without any sort of other dependence as to Divine matters; every bishop being, in his own diocese, the centre of the communion of those Christians within it, and to whom they had recourse for advice and appeals upon all occasions; and that without breaking communion with other churches under other bishops, but observing the same faith and divine worship, with all love and charity; although in matters not essential, and of necessary belief, they sometimes dissented, as in communicating of infants; holding no vision of God before the Resurrection; that all should pass through a great fire at the last day; that Christ should reign on earth a thousand years before the last resurrection, &c. And yet for all these differences and improbabilities, and which lasted to the sixth century, churches did not separate, much less damn and anathematize one another. And therefore, when Pope Victor excommunicated those who did not celebrate Easter as he did, it was despised, and he reproved for it by Irenæus.[2] Nor indeed read we of any separation upon such disputes and things indifferent, till Arius denied the Divinity of Christ, and Macedonius that of the Holy Ghost—Eutyches and Pelagius, who confounded the two natures, attributing that to nature which we have by grace alone.

These and the like incompatible heresies and errors first brake the union; and so, since that, have the Reformed separated from that Church, which holds things destructive to the faith and worship

[1] I. Cor. xi., 27. [2] See Euseb. Hist. Eccles., l. v., 24.

of God, exercising other empire over men's consciences than that of Jesus Christ; which destroys all unity with such as cause the separation, not those who separate.

Our blessed Saviour's Institution was, first, that of the *Apostles;* secondly, of the *Seventy;* which both were over the people in things which concerned God; but which two were subordinate and not equal. Nor does it appear anywhere that the apostles ordained any equality afterwards in the clergy; and, if there be no superiority in the clergy, then can no man perish in the gainsaying of Corah, under the Gospel, as St. Jude affirms they may. For his rebellion was, because he might not be equal with Aaron, appointed his superior by God. It seems St. Paul did command Silas and Timotheus;[1] which sure was a mark of superiority. Bishops then succeeded the Twelve, and, in place of the Seventy, the presbyters, priests, or ministers.[2] And so it was ever thought, till of very late. For, now they will have another regiment in the Church, of lay elders, pastors, and doctors, and whether of deacons, too, is not fully resolved on. As for I. Cor., xii., 28, they pass it by, because there is no mention of *pastor;* and Ephesians, iv., 11, for that, no *lay-elder;* and therefore lay it on Romans, xii., 7, 8, where, by an unheard-of exposition, they find them all four; but not if any ancient writer may be heard; there being no Epistle, upon which so many of them have written—Origen, Chrysostom, Theodoret, Ambrose, &c. See their Comment on the places, and you will not find one of them applied to that Church government, or any of those offices, in those words out of Timothy.[3] They think to fetch their lay-elders, by implication, because there is mention of presbyters in labour, not in preaching.[4]

St. Chrysostom, on the first of Corinthians, i., xvii., hath another sense of the matter: *Evangelizare* (says he) *perpaucorum est; baptizare autem cujuslibet, modo fungatur sacerdotio, et siquidem Presbyteris, qui simpliciores sunt, hoc munus tradimus, ut baptizent: Verbum autem ut doceant, non nisi sapientioribus.* By which it is evident, that in his time it was not thought meet that every one who ministered the Sacraments should also preach. *Quamobrem* (also says the same Father) *qui bene præsunt presby-*

[1] Acts, xvii., 15.
[2] Irenæus, l. iii., c. 3; Tertull. *De Præsul.*, v. 5; St. Augustine, in 44 Psal.
[3] V. 17.
[4] I. Cor., i., 17.

eri, duplici honore digni Sunt, maxime qui laborant in verbo. The meaner sort dealt in baptism, the wiser in the Word; but as for lay-elders not one word; nor were there any such, in all antiquity, ever understood by the name of Presbyters.

THE END.

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